Quality Review Report

2017-2018

P.S. 207
Early Childhood 10X207
3030 Godwin Terrace
Bronx
NY 10463

Principal: Tara Obrien

Dates of Review:
May 3, 2018 - May 4, 2018

Lead Reviewer: Phyllis Siwiec
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. 207 serves students in grade PK through grade 2. 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

### Instructional Core

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Ensure engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula in all subjects, accessible for a variety of learners and aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the instructional shifts and Danielson Framework for Teaching, aligned to the curricula, engaging, and meets the needs of all learners so that all students produce meaningful work products</td>
<td>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

The vast majority of teachers are engaged in inquiry-based, structured professional collaborations where teacher teams systematically analyze classroom practice, assessment, data and student work as in the unit unpacking sessions.

Impact

Collaborations result in shared improvements in teacher practice and mastery of goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- Unit Unpacking Sessions occur every six weeks and are an approach to realigning the curricula with Common Core standards, reflecting on what worked and what did not, who achieved and to what degree, and why? Grade-level teams analyze and process all the components of instruction, content, and student achievement. Units that were just taught are adjusted as a result of teacher reflection, data analysis, and looking at student work. The next unit that is re-examined to reflect what skills were mastered, by whom, and what needs to be reintroduced. Teachers and school leaders spoke of contributions made during this process and the outcome of improved students achievement. Fountas and Pinnell reading assessments are one of the common assessments used during the unpacking sessions to gauge improvement. Kindergarten through grade-two students with disabilities in Integrated Co-Taught classes (ICT) moved up an average of four reading levels from September 2017 to March 2018. A review of data showed improvement in all subgroups from September to March.

- Grade-level teams meet weekly to look at student work and analyze data from it, which they use to make adjustments to the curriculum. The grade leader team meets weekly to share noticings across grades concerning specific content, skills, and strategies. They also observe teachers’ classrooms to share best practices and provide feedback to inform instruction. The Pupil Personnel Team (PPT) and School Implementation Team (SIT) meets weekly to look at student data regarding students who have been referred for or are receiving Special Education services. The teachers use this data to modify students’ service plans to ensure that they are receiving all the support needed to make sufficient progress. The English as a New Language (ENL) Team meets monthly to look at data for students receiving ENL and bilingual Services. The teachers use this data to make decisions about additional supports that can be included in the curriculum to reinforce learning for English Language Learners (ELLs). The capacity of teachers to have a voice in decision-making was strengthened by participation on these teams.

- The kindergarten inquiry team was observed looking at student work using the Fine-tuned Tuning Protocol with a focus on student writing from the previous unit of study. Each brought three pieces of writing from each class, with one piece scored high, one medium and one low. They examined the work to see if students in the three bands showed common characteristics in their work across classrooms, and what implications that might have for a problem of teacher practice. The discussion led them to connecting oral language development to pre-writing discussions using structures, scaffolding with word banks and continued work on questioning by providing questions and question stems. Teachers also considered intervisitations with older-grade teachers to observe students using richer vocabularies and to see what supports are used. All inquiry teams rotate their weekly focus areas among reading data, writing, math, and Fundations and vocabulary.
## Findings

Across most classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect a set of beliefs about how students learn best informed by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and increased use of informational text. Teaching strategies consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula.

## Impact

Although teaching practices provide multiple entry points in many classrooms, they are not found in the vast majority nor are they strategic, with high-quality supports and extensions that would enable all learners to be engaged with higher-order thinking skills and challenging tasks in order to produce meaningful work products.

## Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and staff have created routines that are seen in many classrooms. They include “Morning Meeting” with Monday wellness and nutrition classes, Tuesday through Thursday “Move-to-Improve” physical movement classes, and on Friday a “Growing Leadership Values” class. These are based on the belief that students need to feel safe and cared for while being challenged. In addition, concise teaching points help students focus on what they are learning and why and what it will look like. A shared practice across the school is the articulation of “criteria for success” that lists what expectations for mastery are. Teachers and students spoke about how clear “criteria for success” help with feedback and next steps.

- According to school leaders and teachers, the school’s Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Teachers College-based English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum is tailored to meet the needs of all students. The literacy block includes shared reading of a poem related to unit content, and a schoolwide small-group reading instruction period where students work in content-based “Daily 5” centers and engage in tailored small-group literacy instruction throughout the week and reading and writing experiences connected by content-embedded unit projects. The mathematics block, based in the Five Practices, provides students with an opportunity to analyze math vocabulary and engage in problem-solving tasks. Skills developed in mathematics are exemplified in student created charts for vocabulary along with anchor charts and displayed student work products. Although these are expectations for literacy and math blocks, they are not observable in the vast majority of classes.

- As described by school leadership and as demonstrated, lessons across all classrooms begin with a teaching point where clear expectations for lessons are set with criteria for success that is aligned to the teaching point. Providing students with criteria to monitor and assess their learning helps regulate their ability to engage with tasks. Checks for understanding ensure that expectations are clear along with questions to promote higher order thinking. There are also opportunities for students to share their thinking in a discussion structure (with language objectives) and differentiated supports to ensure that all learners feel successful. Across the school, there is a focus on the development of oral and written language through a variety of reading, writing, listening and speaking opportunities. Learning experiences each day promote student language development and understanding and embed authentic opportunities for students to engage with the world around them.
Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts of increasing non-fiction text along with curricular tasks that are planned and refined using student work and data.

Impact

Purposeful decisions regarding curricula result in coherence that promotes college and career readiness for all students. A diversity of learners has access to the curricula and are cognitively engaged.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to the Common Core standards by meeting every six weeks with student work, data, and reflections on the last six weeks of work. At these “Unit Unpacking Sessions” teachers meet prior to the start of each unit to plan for and adjust the unit of study in both ELA (full day session) and Math (half day). Student work and data are analyzed for trends and patterns along with minutes from weekly common planning meetings. The principal ensured funding was available for substitute teachers during this time. During these sessions, adjustments are made both in units already taught and the next units that need adjusting because of what is uncovered during these analyses. School leaders, including coaches, are part of this process.

- Curricular planning documents and lesson plans demonstrate the school's expectations that students engage in thinking and discussion about their learning as required in the Common Core Learning Standards. For example, across grades Teachers College Reading and Writing lessons include integrated non-fiction social studies and science texts and concepts and promote rigor, academic language development and conceptual understanding that are accessible to all students through hands-on projects. Specifically, in a kindergarten unit of study focused on “How can we compare and contrast plants/animals and non-living things?” students studied living and non-living things with a launch at the Central Park Zoo. The project was called “Zoo Scavenger Hunt and Digital Photo Journals.” By recording what they saw, using iPads, and categorizing and then comparing them, all students had an opportunity to explore the zoo through their photos, conversations and then through reading books and writing. Through the photos, they will have the foundation for a multi-layered series of educational experiences.

- Units of study are paced to provide English Language Learners and students with disabilities appropriate challenges and supports they need in order to access the complex texts in the curriculum and engage in rigorous tasks. For example, during a math lesson, students are identified for differentiation when the teacher stops the class and reminds them about the teaching point and the criteria for success. Students will show a green, yellow, or red card that each has. They are directed to go to a table designated for that color where a differentiated revisit is taught. Across subjects these different levels of difficulty are reflected in tasks and texts and ensure that all students have opportunities to demonstrate their thinking.
## Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use common assessments to determine student progress toward goals. Teacher assessment practices consistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

## Impact

Adjustments are made to curricula and teaching practices based on the results of the Measures Of Student Learning (MOSL) for math, Fountas and Pinnell for reading, and checks for understanding.

## Supporting Evidence

- As reported by school leaders and teachers, adjustments to curricula and alignment to Common Core Learning Standards and instructional shifts are facilitated by the use of a shared online system used by all teachers to share ideas. The school's assessment calendar, provides dates and timelines for assessments with a rationale and updated timeframes and learning between assessments. As an extension of this calendar, the school's comprehensive student data database was developed to collect academic information, administrative notes, placement needs and parent involvement notes. School leaders, coaches, guidance and teaching staff have access to the database throughout the week, and information is utilized during weekly common planning meetings. Teachers use the “207 Looking at Student Work Protocol” to analyze curricular adjustments and to develop next steps related to student work during each unit. Each week, teams choose a focus and collect student work to examine prior to common planning.

- Teachers use a variety of strategies to check for understanding including red-yellow-green-blue cards on a ring; teachers moving around checking in at table groups and asking how they are doing and then recording their comments and organizing in-the-moment follow-up groups. In transition from WE DO it together time to YOU DO it alone there is a check-in with whole class and teachers have students answer by moving to the area of the room that represents that answer. Students also write answers on small whiteboards.

- Using the “criteria for success” that are presented at the beginning of the lesson serve as a guide for self- and peer-assessment. One student’s self-assessment of a science unit integrated with ELA showed the checklists with criteria for success. The unit entitled “Making predictions about Earth Materials” had a self and peer check-off of the criteria with checkmark. There was also room to write a Star (positive comment) such as “I like how you made a prediction.” Also, a “Wish” (feedback for improvement) as in “Write more text evidence.” The form also had teacher feedback: “You made a prediction. Next time read over your work to make sure it makes sense.”
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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</table>

Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the entire staff while teacher teams and staff establish a culture for learning that systematically communicates a unified set of high expectations for all students.

Impact

Staff attend trainings that result in a culture of mutual accountability for those expectations along with providing effective feedback and guidance to ensure that students own their educational experience and are prepared for their next level.

Supporting Evidence

- At the beginning of the school year, leaders distribute and review the digital staff handbook, which delineates expected classroom practices and classroom management strategies, recommended lesson plan format, homework policy, schoolwide grading policy, promotion policy and other schoolwide policies. The expectations are further communicated through weekly team meeting minutes, Daily News and Notes, staff newsletter, bulletin boards, teacher observation feedback, and walkthroughs with specific feedback in the newsletter, which stated, “March is the month of expectations. Let us think about the work we do, what we expect of one another, of our students and the community we serve. Let’s also think about what the community and our students expect of us as well.”

- Expectations for teaching are made clear through the components of the Danielson Framework for Teaching, which are embedded in observations and feedback to teachers as well as in team meetings and professional development. Teachers state that communication from administration is consistent and supportive as they endeavor to be effective and highly effective in the prioritized components of the framework, including discussion and questioning strategies to engage students in challenging tasks.

- The school’s program for social and emotional support with Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is called Respect, Organization, Cooperation, Kindness and Safety (ROCKS). It serves to remind students of their responsibilities toward themselves and others with boards in each classroom that have each child’s name on a clothes pin is affixed to the attribute focused on for a time period. Meanwhile, the walls and bulletin boards on the main floor serve as a reminder to all who enter the school that “207 R.O.C.K.S.” and that leadership values, academics, social-emotional learning and teamwork are priorities.
Additional Finding

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

Findings

School leaders support the development of teachers with effective feedback and next steps from frequent cycles of classroom observations and analysis of student work. An effective system, developed by school leaders, uses teacher observation data to design professional development and develop succession plans.

Impact

Teacher support elevates instructional practices and implements strategies that promote professional growth and reflection.

Supporting Evidence

- According to school leadership and teachers interviewed, school leaders conduct frequent informal and formal observations of teachers and provide written feedback, as evidenced in informal observation reports. These reports are written with feedback focused on the Danielson Framework for Teaching, with suggestions. The two Danielson most often written to in feedback from supervisors are those on using questioning and discussion techniques and using assessment in instruction. For example, feedback with next steps offered these opportunities for improvement. For questioning: “Think about planning one or two questions for your mini-lesson that reach Depth of Knowledge levels 3 and 4. This will provide better discussion opportunities and more thought-provoking ideas to be elicited from students.” For assessment, feedback offered “To move your practice toward highly effective, think about how you can infuse questions and checks for understanding and how you can monitor student progress to advance learning throughout your lessons.”

- School leaders also meet with teacher teams every six weeks as members of the “Unit Unpacking Session” where teachers bring student work, lesson plans, and data, to develop next units, while reflecting and reviewing the unit that was just completed. Though instructional in focus, these sessions allow the participants to connect student work with tasks, Common Core standards met and not met and instructional capacity. Feedback to teachers accurately captures strengths, challenges, and next steps, articulating clear expectations for teachers with helpful guidance and suggestions. The impact is that teachers feel supported and involved in professional improvement.

- In another example, a school leader provided this information to a teacher for whom questioning was a focus: “On Monday PLs from February to June will be focused on questioning and discussion and its impact on the development of oral and written language (our instructional focus). In addition to our Monday PLs Ms. ________ and Ms ________ will be conducting a smaller PL series with a group of teachers in March.” The impact is that teachers can support their peers’ improvement in professional and meaningful ways.

- The school has an online platform for recording support for teachers on logs that are accessible to teachers and administrators. Each teacher has an individual log so confidentiality is maintained. Teacher may log on to see what their goals are, support provided, and Next Steps and with whom. Supports provided range from website viewing of teaching demonstrations to monitoring implementation of new programs. Teachers commented on its usefulness and appreciation for the support.