Quality Review Report

2017-2018

The Angelo Patri Middle School
Junior High-Intermediate-Middle 10X391
2225 Webster Avenue
Bronx
NY 10457

Principal: Giselle Fortiche Ocampo

Dates of Review:
May 29, 2018 - May 30, 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

The Angelo Patri Middle School 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](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>Developing</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>Developing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## School Quality Ratings continued

### 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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<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>Area of Celebration</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>
</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>
Findings

School leaders and instructional coaches support the development of teachers, including those new to the profession, with effective feedback and analysis of student work. Feedback to teachers accurately captures strengths, challenges, and next steps using the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

Impact

First-year teachers have informal observations to promote professional growth. Feedback is given to teachers following instructional walkthroughs and formal observations that capture expectations for teacher practices and support for development.

Supporting Evidence

- All teachers including first-year teachers receive frequent informal observations. An informal observation of a first-year teacher demonstrated how student work was analyzed and support for the teacher to improve. The teacher’s practices were rated developing in designing coherent instruction. The principal looked at student work which included student focus questions that they were working on in small groups. The principal noted that the work was not differentiated based on student performance levels. Feedback to the teacher included, “Develop and consistently reinforce expectations and protocols for students to work independently and in groups.” When asked about school leadership support, the teacher stated that the observation was part of a series of informals throughout the year that are designed to support their growth as new teachers.

- The principal uses formal observations to provide feedback to all teachers. The observations are tied to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. A formal observation from this past spring demonstrated instructional expectations for a math teacher. They included, “Design activities that present students with opportunities for higher-level thinking,” and “Consider the different learning needs for students when creating groups.” In an informal observation from April, teacher pedagogy was rated developing in using questioning and discussion techniques. Feedback was tied to instructional expectations that included, “You are expected to plan and design questions to elicit the extent of student understanding during the lesson so that you can get information that will allow you to modify the lesson.” Feedback included, “It is important to use formative assessments to monitor student learning and assess student understanding of learning outcomes.” The principal also provided a learning-target tracker and instructions on data-driven instruction as additional supports. Teachers have stated that support and feedback have allowed them to remain aligned with the school’s instructional expectations to improve on their practices.

- Instructional walkthroughs are used to provide support to teachers in meeting the school’s instructional expectations. To support the expectation of using assessments during instruction, a coach visited a math class. Using a coaching-visit information sheet, she conducted an instructional walkthrough of five teachers. The walkthrough included classroom observations and next steps. In one class, the teacher noted that students were not using fraction strips correctly to find equivalent fractions. Next steps included students properly using assessment strips to assess their work and ensure that they are using them daily. In another class, the coach noted that most of the students were not focused during a fraction lesson. Next steps offered to this teacher included increasing the use of visuals to engage students. Coaches support instructional expectations in all classes.
Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are becoming aligned to the curricula and beginning to reflect the articulated beliefs, stated by the principal, that students learn best when they are required to explain their work. Across classrooms, student work products and discussions are evident in some classes.

Impact

While students in small groups participate in high levels of thinking through discussions and accountable talk stems, this was not evident in most classes. Meaningful work products are not evident in all students’ work.

Supporting Evidence

- Students were engaged in high levels of thinking and participation in some classes. During the observation of a grade-eight social studies class, students were engaged in a conversation about the Holocaust. One student stated that the word means sacrifice by fire. During a turn and talk, students discussed their feelings about the definition of the Holocaust. A student stated, “I don’t understand what the meaning of the word has to do with the suffering that took place.” Another student stated, “The definition is ironic because I think sacrifice would mean it’s something they had a choice in.” Although students were engaged, the teacher selected the same students to share out while other students sat quietly and did not participate.

- Students used accountable talk stems to demonstrate their high levels of thinking while they participated in lessons, although this was not evident in most classes visited. In a grade-eight English Language Arts (ELA) class, the teacher asked the students, “Why is the author’s description of the sun important to the story?” A student responded, “Because the sun represents a mood.” Another student stated, “I would like to add on to what he said. The sun made people happy, so it did reflect their mood.” Using an additional accountable talk stem, another student stated, “I would like to disagree with you. There are different points of view in the story. Some characters were upset when the sun was out.” Although this class used accountable talk stems, this level of discussion was inconsistent in other classes. For example, in a grade-eight science class, students were creating a test question based on a scientific topic. Discussion was limited to short answers with minimal student participation. In another class, the teacher asked who the text was about. A student responded, “An eleven year old boy.” Most students did not contribute to the discussion and the teacher continued with the lesson.

- Students were given opportunities to explain their work to each other in some classes visited. During the observation of a grade-six ELA class, students were working on preparing for a debate. The learning target was, “I can present claims, rebuttals, evidence and reasoning by participating in a classroom debate.” To explain their understanding of the learning target, students were required to discuss with each other the components of a debate. One student stated, “A debate is an argument about your opinion or what you think should happen. You need a strong statement to have a debate.” During a student interview, students stated that they feel they learn best by explaining their work to each other, but they do not always have the opportunity to do so. This was evident in other classes visited.
Additional Finding

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

School leaders and teachers make purposeful decisions to ensure that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and that the instructional shifts are integrated. Curricula and academic tasks consistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills.

Impact

Unit and lesson plans demonstrate college and career readiness by requiring students to cite textual evidence and explain their thinking. Unit plans support rigorous work for English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities.

Supporting Evidence

- Most tasks include activities for students to explain their thinking and demonstrate conceptual understanding to support rigorous tasks for ELLs. Lesson plans provide supports that include accountable talk frames that enable students to comprehend the material and assist students with tools to help explain their thinking. An example was seen in a grade-six informational lesson plan that requires students to identify the criteria needed to create a “good” discussion question. Students are required to use accountable talk frames such as ‘I agree because’, ‘I disagree because’ and ‘I would like to add’, in Spanish. To support rigorous practices, the lesson requires ELLs to work on the same tasks as other students and requires students to be placed in heterogeneous groups to work with other students to engage in discussions to explain their thinking. Additionally, students received scaffolds that include graphic organizers and additional modeling for small groups of students. Most lessons reviewed, provide scaffolds and multiple entry points for ELLs.

- To support college and career readiness and the integration of learning standards and instructional shifts, lesson plans demonstrate support for deepening students’ understanding. In a grade-seven ELA lesson plan on “How point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text,” students are to cite textual evidence to express and support their thinking. The lesson requires students to write an argument to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. Students first have to reveal the author’s purpose, then create an argument to support it, and cite the text that supports their claim. To further explain their thinking, students must differentiate between fact, opinion, and reasoned judgement in a text. Teachers have stated that the Common Core Learning Standards have prepared students to understand reading material and discuss its meaning, based on their own interpretation, and explain it.

- Students with disabilities are exposed to rigorous work through purposeful lesson planning. In a self-contained ELA lesson plan, the learning target of the lesson was, “I can describe an author’s technique used in my literature-circle book and explain how and why the author uses it.” Students are required to annotate passages from the book and explain why they are key elements in the story. Students are also to demonstrate their findings and cite textual evidence to support their claims. Teachers have stated that lesson plans are designed to expose students with disabilities to the same level of rigor that other students are exposed to with supports to help them meet their goals.
Additional Finding

Quality Indicator: 2.2 Assessment  
Rating: Developing

Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use or create assessments, rubrics, and grading policies that are loosely aligned with the school’s curricula. Teachers’ assessment practices inconsistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

Impact

Teachers provide limited feedback to students regarding their achievement. Self-assessments and checks for understanding do not always result in adjustments to meet the learning needs of students.

Supporting Evidence

- An argumentative writing rubric was used to provide feedback to students. However, the feedback did not always provide clear actionable steps for the students to follow. In one example presented, the student work received a two on a four-point rubric. Feedback included, “I love how your claim was clearly stated. I noticed that your explanations are very brief.” The feedback did not provide the student with clear steps to improve writing. In another example using a four-point writing rubric, the student work received a two on coherence, organization and style: inconsistent use of transitions. Although feedback was actionable it did not reflect the areas on the rubric that the student needed to improve upon. The teacher stated, “Be sure to write out the whole rule so it is clear to someone who didn’t read the book.” When students were asked how feedback supports their learning, one student stated, “It helps me know how I am doing in the class but all of my teachers don’t provide feedback.”

- Students use a personal-narrative checklist to reflect on their progress. An example of the impact of this self-reflection on instruction was evident in a grade-six personal narrative checklist. The student recorded that he was proficient in transitions, elaboration, and beginning/opening, and that he was starting to demonstrate organization and punctuation. The teacher stated that the student will be placed in small groups to work on the specific areas during small-group instruction. However, this practice was not clear in other examples. During a student interview, a student presented a self-editing sheet on which the student was required to check off the areas that he completed. The student checked off that he included transitional words, included two pieces of evidence about the topic paragraph, and provided evidence to support the answer. The student did not check off: expressing significance of the topic and include an explanation of how the evidence supported the answer. When asked what the follow up was from the teacher to improve in these areas, the student stated, “The class was told to discuss it with our peers. We didn’t receive any other support for writing essays.”

- Checks for understanding are evident in some classes visited. However, they do not always result in effective adjustments. For example, in a grade-seven math class, students were working on explaining complementary and supplementary angles. The teacher did a check for understanding and asked, “Who can tell me, based on what you have in your book, what is angle C?” When no one volunteered, the teacher continued the lesson, stating “What do we call angles that share a ray?” When no one answered, the teacher stated “They are adjacent angles.” In most classes observed, teachers conducted checks for understanding. However, they did not always result in an adjustment for understanding when students did not know the content.
Additional Finding

| Quality Indicator: | 3.4 High Expectations | Rating: | Proficient |

**Findings**

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

**Impact**

The principal uses weekly updates and the staff handbook to communicate expectations to teachers and provide professional development (PD) based upon them, holding teachers accountable. Parents participate in a community forum to stay informed of instructional expectations and their child’s progress towards them.

**Supporting Evidence**

- The principal and teachers stated that the instructional focus for the year was student engagement. In the staff handbook that was distributed at the beginning of the year, the principal stated the following to teachers, "Ensure that all activities address all learning styles; all students must be engaged." To support this initiative, PD was provided at the beginning of the year. Teachers looked at engagement through each content area to examine different strategies for different subject areas. For example, the math team looked at ways to make math more hands on for students. All teachers stated that they received the teacher handbook and use it to make sure they are fulfilling instructional expectations.

- The principal and staff have implemented a community forum to engage parents. The forum is a series of meetings to involve parents in areas that include attendance, social-emotional growth and academics. Parent workshops, discussed at the forum meetings, include strategies parents can use to maximize their experiences at high school fairs and open houses. Parents were informed of what their children need to graduate and how they are performing in their current classes. The school provided data that shows that parent engagement, including parent workshops and parent-teacher conferences, has increased for the current school year by fifteen percent. One parent stated, “The communication between the school and the parents is very strong; I know how my child is performing and I know how I can contribute to his learning beyond this school.”

- The principal uses weekly newsletters that are emailed to staff to communicate high expectations. The principal reminded staff of the importance of family engagement in a March eighteen letter by stating, “Please work in your grade-level teams to plan a family meeting for April third and seventeen.” The principal also stated in the newsletter that it was expected that the meeting be content-based so that parents could support their children's academic progress at home. Teachers have stated that they receive the weekly memorandum every Sunday and that grade leaders and administrators have follow ups during the week.
**Additional Finding**

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

**Findings**

Teacher teams consistently analyze assessment data and student work for students they share or on whom they are focused. Distributed leadership structures are in place.

**Impact**

Grade-level and data-team meetings are conducted to improve teacher practice and student progress. Lead teachers help make decisions that impact student learning.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Minutes from a grade-eight team meeting demonstrated how teachers used student work to discuss different teacher practices. The aim of the meeting was, “To increase student achievement in reading, writing, and math by engaging students in higher-order thinking tasks.” Teachers looked at iReady data and found that students struggled in constructive responses. Teachers suggested placing students into small guided-writing groups based on how they performed. Teachers also discussed using annotation to cite textual evidence to help improve students’ constructive response. Grades six, seven and eight teams look at data to improve teacher pedagogy and student performance. Teachers stated that the information they receive from the team improves their performance. An example was provided by a teacher that stated, “Because we have an effective data team, I learned how to better provide multiple entry points and small groups based on the data.” As a result of these collaborations, all students have made a thirty percent improvement on the third interim assessments in ELA and social studies.

- Distributed leadership structures are in place. This is demonstrated by the use of an Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) that represents each grade level and subject area. The role of the ILT teachers is to serve as liaison between the teachers and administration. ILT members meet once per week to discuss instruction. They are responsible for the planning, creation, and development of grade-level meetings. The impact of this is evident in the team’s work as they were instrumental in moving towards Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) from project-based learning. The team also led the drive to move towards The Key Elements to Mathematics Success (KEMS) curriculum that eliminated the need of chunking different math curricula to meet the needs of all students.

- To further support teacher growth, teachers collaborate as a data team. The team consists of different grade levels. The aim of a March sixteen meeting was to provide assessment supports and scaffolds for students. The team discussed using a two- and four-point rubric for every student. One teacher discussed using compare and contrast graphic organizers to support ELLs. The team also looked at iReady data and noticed that students were not fully explaining their evidence in extended responses. Quick-fix strategies discussed included, “Stop and reread your writing to make changes.” The data team looks at assessment data to inform teachers on grade-level teams to build coherence across grades.