Quality Review Report

2017-2018

J. M. Rapport School Career Development

High school 75X754
470 Jackson Avenue
Bronx
NY 10455

Principal: Daniel Hoehn

Dates of Review:
December 5, 2017 - December 6, 2017

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


School Quality Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</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>Well Developed</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>
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</tbody>
</table>
### School Culture

**To what extent does the school...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that supports the academic and personal growth of students and adults</td>
<td>Area of Celebration</td>
</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>
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</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>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>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

The school’s approach to culture building, discipline, and social-emotional support is informed by a theory of action and the school coordinates social-emotional learning and development structures.

## Impact

There is a safe and inclusive structure at the school and students have opportunities to positively impact decisions about school improvement. Development and guidance structures positively impact students’ personal behaviors.

### Supporting Evidence

- **Student council meets once per week to address issues concerning school improvement.** When the council met to discuss the school-bussing schedule, one recommendation was based on the concern about the dismissal time for students who take the bus. Students said that they were not getting full instructional time during the last period because they had to leave before the period was over to go down to bussing. As a result, the bus schedule was changed by 20 minutes so that students who ride the bus can remain present for the entire period. Students stated that all student council decisions are made by consulting all students. An additional example of how student voice promotes positive personal behavior was articulated by a student council member. Students created positive shout-outs for students. For example, a student received a shout-out for helping another student with homework during lunchtime. Another shout-out involved a student walking away from a conflict. Students have extended the shout-outs to teachers as well. As evidenced by these practices, student voice leads school improvements and contributes to a positive environment.

- **Structures that allow students to be known well by an adult in the building result in personal behavioral improvements.** An example presented from guidance counselors demonstrated that their schedules extend to meeting with non-mandated students as well as the mandated ones. A guidance counselor stated that this was important because most of the non-mandated students come to the counselors with personal issues such as bullying, gender issues, and sex. This was impactful as all students stated during an interview that interacting with the counselors was one of their favorite things about the school. One student stated, “When I first came to this school the counselor welcomed me at made me feel like a part of the family. I can talk to her about personal problems.”

- **School structures include an action chart to address behavioral infractions and connect them with the appropriate intervention.** The chart lists infractions from levels one to three. The appropriate actions include contacting parents, parent conference, and removal of students from class. Infractions can result in student removal and administrative intervention. The plan is part of the I Communicate, Attend, Respect, Excel (iCARE) program that was created by staff, parents, and students. The program is personalized for each individual student in the school. Students participate in an exit interview at the end of every class. They must answer five questions that allow them to receive five points per class for a total of 200 points per week. The point system allows behavior to be tracked as well as provides an opportunity for students to earn points, thus positively impacting students’ personal behaviors.
### Findings

Across classrooms, teacher practices reflect an articulated belief of how students learn best. Students produce meaningful work products and participate in discussions across classrooms.

### Impact

Teacher practices informed by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* are not yet coherent across the vast majority of classrooms. Student work products reflect high levels of student thinking and participation; however, there are missed opportunities to build student ownership.

### Supporting Evidence

- In a global studies class, students demonstrated high levels of thinking and participation. The teacher asked the class to discuss in groups, “How was Emperor Shi Huangdi a good leader?” Some student responses included, “I feel he was a good leader because he brought the states together” and “I disagree because he supported Legalism.” When asked what Legalism meant, the student stated that people did not have free choice. One student stated that his picture does not look like he is a leader. Although students were engaged in the discussion, their responses were taken directly from the text and did not reflect ownership. For example, when asked why Legalism was an example of poor leadership and what it means to him personally another student stated, “Leaders have to give people free choice.” Although the student answered the question, ownership was not evident as students were not aware of their next learning steps when asked how the lesson improved their learning.

- Teachers and leaders have stated that students learn best by peer-to-peer engagement. In a grade-eleven English Language Arts (ELA) class, students were observed discussing women’s rights. The class was broken up into three groups. One group was observed using a graphic organizer that was divided into two columns. The first column represented, “What Stanton believes America is/has.” The second column read, “Things that oppress women.” One student stated, “Stanton believes women and men are equal. At the time, America believed that men had more rights.” In another group, students were working on answering three questions based on a picture of women on top of a steam roller that was labeled *progress*. One student stated that the pictured showed women making progress. When asked to explain, the student stated, “They are moving ahead.” Although students in this class were engaged in discussion, this was not evident in the vast majority of classes. For example, in a grade-ten ELA class, students were working the topic “Can the American flag be burned in protest?” The teacher asked closed questions that did not allow for classroom discussion. Questions included, “Should the flag be burned?” and “What does the first amendment protect?” Students answered the question but did not have an opportunity to discuss with each other.

- Teachers used questioning and discussion techniques to engage students in classes visited. Teachers stated this is another example of how students learn best. In a bilingual alternate assessment class, students were engaged in a question-and-answer exercise. The lesson was on reading a recipe for applesauce. Students were asked to list different items they would need for the recipe. The teacher held up a spoon and said in Spanish, “Who can tell me what this is?” A student used a technology device that had a picture of a spoon and pointed to it. The teacher then asked, “What else do we need?” Another student pointed to an apple. An additional student pointed to brown sugar. The teacher asked the student to choose between the white and brown sugar. The student selected the brown. The teacher stated, “We need eight apples, can you count eight apples?” Students counted to eight, some in English and some in Spanish, while others pointed eight times. Although students were able to answer questions, this was not evident in the all classrooms visited.
Findings

School leaders and teachers ensure that the curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and strategically integrate the instructional shifts. The curricula are refined based on student work.

Impact

College and career readiness is reflected across a coherent curriculum for all grades. Curricula are refined to ensure cognitive engagement for all students, including individuals.

Supporting Evidence

- The school utilizes an approach to revising the curriculum that focuses on cognitive engagement for individual students. A lesson was modified to include a model for each section to help a lower-functioning student answer each question. An additional example of curricula revision was seen in a lesson for alternate assessment students for an ELA unit. The unit was modified for all alternative assessment students so that they could work with the same standards that standardized students work with. Modifications included using notes to introduce main idea, using a main idea review game, and using a graphic organizer. Extensions for high-performing students included additional questions and additional higher-order thinking skills.

- All lesson plans reflect the strategic integration of Common Core Learning Standards and instructional shifts across all grades and subjects. A grade-eleven ELA lesson plan demonstrated the use of Common Core and shifts as students were required to evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, and rewrite vocabulary word definitions in their own words. This was also evident in a social studies class lesson plan that required students to identify key vocabulary words and phrases in an informational text. In a social studies lesson plan, literacy standards were used that required students to determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source. A math lesson demonstrated how students will go over vocabulary words and read and interpret their meaning. Standards are integrated coherently by the data and curriculum teams.

- Teachers and school leaders have created a document entitled Curriculum Evolution. The document outlines how the school makes revisions to the curriculum based on individual student data. For example, the curriculum listed for ELA was the Hochman Method and the noticings included that ELA, social studies, and science teachers were using writing techniques in their classes that are based on that model. The desired outcomes included a successful roll-out for the second year and continued improvement based on data from Regents scores that suggest students still need more work on writing skills. The revision process includes reviewing the data with the assessment team followed by the leadership team, making proposed changes to the scope and sequence, and reviewing each subject area for further implementation. The school is in its second year of implementation and baseline assessments for ELA and writing demonstrate an increase of 39 percent from 2016 to 2017.
Additional Finding

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

Across classrooms, teachers and students use glows and grows that align with the school's curricula. Across classrooms, teachers' assessment practices consistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding.

Impact

Teachers' use of rubrics and student work provides actionable feedback to students. Teachers' use of student self-assessment and checks for understanding leads to effective adjustments to meet the learning needs of all students.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers incorporate student self-assessments into their instruction. In ELA across grades, students use an editing and revising checklist for their writing assignments. The checklist allows students to assess their writing in areas such as indenting paragraphs, punctuation, capitalization, transition words and creating an interesting introduction. A checklist was presented that showed the student checked off for punctuation, correct spelling, and the sentences stayed focused on the topic. The checklist includes a glow and grow from the teacher that included, “Nice job editing your work. Next time check for spelling mistakes before moving to the publishing stage.” An additional self- and peer-assessment was observed on which the student assessed their academic performance and compared it to how a peer assessed it. The checklist was on how the student excelled, communicated, and showed respect. A student and his peer checked off that they finished their work, asked questions during the lesson, tried harder today than yesterday, and stayed for the entire class. Teachers reported that the peer assessments have allowed for them to make adjustments to meet the needs of students.

- Teachers provide actionable feedback to students by using glows and grows on student work across grades and subjects as a part of the school's assessment protocol for all students. For example, on a worksheet on main ideas, the teacher stated the following glow, “Your class participation is great and you always demonstrate a good understanding of the text.” The grows included, “Use the outline to create topic sentences to be used in each paragraph.” On an additional student work sample on a math worksheet on reading line graphs, the glow stated, “You follow directions and complete your work in a timely manner.” The grow stated, “Now work on completing tasks without the additional supports.” One student stated, “The feedback we receive helps us revise our work and makes us think.”

- During classroom instruction, teachers use checks for understanding to adjust their instruction. An example was seen in a grade eleven ELA class in which the aim was “How do we write an argumentative essay?” The teacher asked the class during whole-group instruction, “Why should the claim be at the intro?” A student stated, “It tells people what you’re going to write about.” The teacher asked another student if he understood the concept. When the student stated no, the teacher adjusted the lesson and used questioning to guide the student to understanding. The student then stated, “So my claim is that schools should not have structured recess and now the reader will know what I’m writing about.” An additional example was seen in a statistics class. The teacher was observed adjusting the questions during the lesson. For example, students were having difficulty answering the question, “What predictions can we make about Mr. Snuffles’ weight?” Students were non-responsive. The teacher then revised the question by asking, “Mr. Snuffles lost five pounds in the third week and gained ten pounds in week four. How much does he weigh now? What can we say about these changes?”
## 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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### Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations aligned with the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* to staff and successfully partner with families to communicate expectations connected to college and career readiness.

### Impact

The school leaders’ focus on cultivating rigor and college readiness results in a culture of mutual accountability for all school community members, including successful partnerships with families that support student progress towards expectations.

### Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and teachers have initiated a transition workshop for parents. The purpose of this program is to provide parents with information on continual programs, providing employment programs and group-home opportunities, as their children age out of the school and also to inform them about the college process. The transition coordinator works with the parents on a one-to-one basis. This was impactful as a survey stated that 93 percent of parents feel that the school supports them in transitioning students into services and programs after graduation. This was evident as student progress was supported by these programs. During a parent interview, a parent stated, “I chose this school because I knew it would help my son focus on college and careers, not just college when he was finished with school.” An additional parent spoke about the work-study program at Manhattan College. Successful partnerships with parents include working with the Parent Teacher Association on assisting with arranging site trips and selecting work-study programs. Parents contribute to the successful partnership by working with the school and having a voice on the selection of the continual programs for their child based on individual needs. Parents also visit their child’s workshops to help inform them of decisions regarding these programs.

- Teachers demonstrate mutual accountability for high expectations which include teaching outside the classroom. This teacher-led initiative involves working with a group of students on classroom projects. One project included teaching students to grow vegetables and raise chickens in a chicken coop located on the school grounds. During a tour of the farm and the coop, students stated, “Our teacher teaches us that we have to learn skills outside of the class to get the best educational experience possible.” Other high expectations include respecting students. This expectation is documented in the staff handbook. Teachers demonstrate mutual accountability by helping to facilitate a growth mindset professional development that helped trained teachers how to provide positive feedback to students by valuing their contributions to the class. A professional development agenda was presented that required teachers to learn how to provide positive reinforcement with praise for the student’s abilities rather than the person so that they may take value in their efforts.

- The principal uses the staff handbook to articulate high expectations for all staff members. These expectations include the inclusion of the Individual Educational Program (IEP) in instructional design and implementation. Staff members created an IEP manual for all staff members. The manual demonstrated how to conduct an annual review meeting, how to keep parents informed of progress, and how to implement the IEP. This was impactful as every teacher interviewed was able to discuss how they incorporate IEP goals into their planning. This was evident in the differentiation section of lesson plans that reflected student IEP goals.
Findings

Teacher teams systematically analyze key elements of teacher work that include classroom practices, assessment data, and student work for students they share or on whom they are focused. Distributed leadership structures are embedded across the school.

Impact

Teacher team work results in improvements in teacher practice and mastery of goals for groups of students. IEP teams and subject-area teams play an integral role in key decisions that affect student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- The school supports distributive leadership that is designed to give teachers an important voice in instructional decisions. Teachers and school leaders have implemented a leadership institute. The five teachers participate in district level meetings to improve the quality of IEPs for students throughout the city. This team is responsible for overseeing the annual review manual for student IEPs that is used by all teachers. The school also has an instructional cabinet that is comprised of teacher leaders that train teachers in curriculum initiatives. This was impactful as the team was responsible for rolling out the Hochman Method writing initiative that is now used schoolwide. An additional example was seen as each school site has a unit coordinator that oversees daily operations of the sites.

- Teacher teams use a collaborative assessment IEP conference protocol to look at student work to move students towards mastery of goals. A meeting in December began by looking at formal assessment results and student work to determine individual student strengths and weaknesses. One student reviewed showed strengths that consisted of strong comprehension skills. An ELA mid-unit assessment showed that the student could read and determine the main idea in a short story without support. Weaknesses included handwriting and summarizing a text. Supports put into place included the use of a checklist for punctuation and capitalization and visual charts and graphic organizers to aid in summarizing a text. The teachers also looked at math, which showed areas of strength included solving word problems and addition. Weakness included multiplication and division. Academic interventions for math included using flash cards, visual charts to aid with multiplication and division, and mathematical brain teasers. These meetings take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays. This was impactful as a survey recorded that over 90 percent of teachers felt that collaborations support student mastery. Students also improved by twenty-five percent from last year on the ELA Regents. A teacher also stated, “the team meetings have allowed me to improve teaching reading and writing strategies that include chunking and annotation.”

- The humanities department presented documents from an October common planning meeting. The minutes consisted of highs and lows, shout-outs, peer review, and the review of unit two skills and strategies. The meeting was broken down by minutes. Fifteen minutes were designated for challenges that their students may face and questions and concerns that the teacher has about the implementation of the lesson. The minutes also include a peer-review check off that includes alignment with the Hochman Method, level of rigor and challenge, and differentiation for students who have achieved mastery in writing short responses. The goal was to show improvement in writing stamina for standard assessment students. Teachers demonstrated the impact of these meetings by showing work samples of student writing taken from baseline assessments compared to post assessments for standard assessment students. They demonstrate that students went from writing in fragments to complete thoughts across the content between beginning of the year and middle of the year assessments. This was evident in all teacher minutes across social studies, ELA, and science.