Quality Review Report

2018-2019

P.S. 031 Samuel F. Dupont
Elementary 14K031
75 Meserole Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11222

Principal: Mary Scarlato

Dates of Review:
May 9, 2019 - May 10, 2019

Lead Reviewer: Edward Hazen
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. 031 Samuel F. Dupont serves students in grade PK through grade 5. You will find information about this school, including enrollment, attendance, student demographics, and data regarding academic performance, at http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/tools/report/default.htm.

School Quality Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To what extent does the school...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Ensure engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula in all subjects, accessible for a variety of learners and aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>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>Well Developed</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>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>
</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>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 and discipline includes both outreach to families and staff-focused professional learning and activities relative to a schoolwide philosophy of educating the whole child that promotes the belief that positive interactions and celebrations of the diversity of the students and staff will result in the adoption of effective habits and create good citizens.

Impact

Administrators and staff maintain a safe environment that promotes an inclusive culture where student learning and voice is welcomed, resulting in the adoption of effective academic and personal behaviors.

Supporting Evidence

- The school community has adopted the Respect for All philosophy that promotes interpersonal and inter-group respect among and between students and staff, is supportive of their values and helps them to celebrate the diverse population of the school. The school has also implemented the Leader in Me program to empower students to be leaders in life and guides the planning of an annual Leadership Day celebrating student and school successes. Similarly, to emphasize the adoption of effective personal habits such as good attendance, academic achievement, positive behavior and good citizenship, administration and staff has implemented the 7 Habits of Happy Kids. The program includes daily reinforcement and practice in the classroom, and requires students to set goals that are tracked in a leadership notebook and follows them from grade to grade so they can monitor their social emotional growth longitudinally over time.

- The implementation of multiple activities and programs throughout the year such as “start (the day) with hello”, family multicultural events and celebrations, and ongoing effective partnerships with families and community members, align with the inclusive nature of the school. Teachers, students and parents report that the staff have created a welcoming environment that strongly encourages participation by the greater community. A student council is in place providing opportunities for students to share ideas in running schoolwide events and provide input for school-based community outreach and engagement activities such as coat and food drives. Students have asked to take on leadership roles and were successful in opening up the “Book Nook,” a student-run store that sells school supplies that raises funds while teaching them how to run a business.

- The school staff partners with parents to provide professional development, family outreach and supports that result in students adopting effective academic and personal behaviors. Parents noted that the school provides numerous workshops for families including many that are run by parents. Parents reported that a peer initiated the idea of “starting the day with hello” and provided training to parents, students and staff to encourage positive and professional interactions and attitudes among all school community members. Students stated that the programs that the school has in place has made a difference because they work harder to achieve their academic and behavioral goals they set for themselves. In addition, they “consistently try to be proactive, one of the pillars of the Happy Kids program, when it comes to doing things like projects or homework.” Likewise, parents reported that the program has transferred to student home life where their children try to be proactive by doing things like household chores before having to be asked.
Area of Focus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.2 Pedagogy</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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</table>

Findings

Teaching practices are aligned to the school’s belief about how students learn best. Pedagogy consistently utilizes strategies such as the workshop model learning structure, questioning, and discussions to promote high levels of thinking and engagement for a diversity of learners.

Impact

Across grades and content areas, teaching practices that consistently reflect school-identified best practices provide most students with challenging learning tasks requiring the use of critical thinking, analysis, and problem solving; however, engagement of higher achievers was not consistent across classes nor did all students demonstrate ownership of their work by contributing equally to a group task or discussion.

Supporting Evidence

- The school’s articulated vision of creating critical thinkers and problem solvers through rigorous learning is evident across grade levels and content areas. Instructional foci to meet this vision such as reciprocal teaching, student discourse and differentiated instruction to address student individualized learning styles, needs, and modalities, were identified by school leaders and staff. In addition, these practices were observed during classroom visits, with students having access to scaffolds such as manipulatives, graphic organizers, and visuals. However, these practices were not prevalent across the vast majority of classrooms visited. While instruction was differentiated in some classes to allow multiple entry points into the lesson, in other classes there were no scaffolds or specialized instructional strategies utilized for top achieving students.

- In most classes visited, teachers used strategies such as inquiry, collaborative learning, questioning, and discussions to promote cognitive challenge and engagement. Teachers design rigorous activities and use scaffolding techniques to provide entry points into lessons and academic tasks for a variety of learners. To begin a fourth-grade math lesson, the teacher modeled how to solve a math problem using the strategy circle key numbers, underline the question, box action words, evaluate, solve (CUBES) prior to students transitioning to ability-based groups to practice differentiated math tasks with a peer while also receiving one-on-one coaching from the teacher as needed. Students that needed manipulatives were provided them. This structure and protocol was also observed in another math class where the teacher modeled how to use the CUBES strategy before students worked on differentiated math tasks based on ability while the teacher checked in with students and provided one-on-one instruction to students who needed further support.

- The level of structured group work that holds students individually accountable for engaging in group tasks and contributing to the work of the cooperative learning groups varied across classrooms. In a first grade English Language Arts (ELA) lesson, students were asked to work with an elbow partner to create a thinking map and design questions based on an informational text they had read. However, not all students shared the work equally, and some students were observed discussing topics unrelated to the task or talking with other pairs. Some pairs opted not to participate and let their peers complete the thinking map, therefore evidencing a lack of ownership.
Findings

The school leaders and faculty ensure alignment to the Common Core Learning Standards through the integration of the instructional shifts across grades and subjects, with an emphasis on implementing reciprocal teaching. Rigorous academic tasks are planned to engage all students in challenging academic and tasks.

Impact

The curricula and academic tasks build coherence across grades and subjects and support college and career readiness for all students, including those with diverse learning needs. The vast majority of teachers strategically plan engaging, higher-level cognitive tasks for all students, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities, resulting in improved work products.

Supporting Evidence

- To build coherence across grades and subjects and purposefully integrate the Common Core, school leaders and teachers design their own curricula and opt to use supplemental programs and materials. The school’s Exemplar Team, consisting of lead teachers from grades kindergarten through fifth grade, meet bi-weekly to ensure that the instructional shifts are embedded in units of study and lesson plans. For example, the team decided to utilize reciprocal teaching strategies and rubrics that were incorporated into each math exemplar problem-solving activity. A recommendation was also made to supplement math practice through the use of Finish Line Math in first grade through grade five to provide additional opportunities for students to practice problem solving. As a result, all teachers focused on incorporating more standards and spiraling lessons into unit plans to increase mastery of math concepts.

- The Exemplar Team works collaboratively with classroom and cluster teachers, teacher teams, and intervention and support providers on designing curriculum. The goal is to design and revise curricula and academic tasks so that students with disabilities, ELLs, and higher and/or lower performing students are cognitively engaged in the lesson. The grade-level curriculum teams meets weekly to analyze student work and data to refine grade-level curricula and plan multiple entry points into lessons. A review of lesson plans indicated that many teachers use the work of the Exemplar Team to plan entry points and scaffolds in English and Spanish, such as graphic organizers, sentence frames, exemplars, and accountable talk prompts. Planning in a math unit of study included connecting language such as “tens” with concrete images and the pictorial experiences of money and fingers or manipulatives.

- Based on a review of curricula, all teachers plan differentiated tasks and specific strategies to support ELLs and students with disabilities. For example, in classes with ELLs, teachers included a language objective for the lesson based on student language progression. Similarly, teachers included specific strategies to support students with disabilities in their lesson plans such as learning maps to help them to organize their thoughts and guide their thinking prior to starting a writing task. Other lesson plans included extension activities for higher performing students or universal designs for learning to assist students who may struggle with a math concept. For example, in a math lesson, teachers planned to have manipulatives and visual aids available for students who may struggle to define and represent the term, “multiplication”. Additionally, student choice of the strategy they could use was included in the lesson, such as, “Students may model groups of six with drawings or by using blocks.”
Findings

The vast majority of teachers use or create assessments and rubrics that align to the curricula to monitor student progress toward mastery. Teachers use analyses of assessment data to monitor student progress, make instructional decisions and adjust or refine curricula and academic tasks.

Impact

Teacher use of common rubrics and assessments provide actionable and meaningful feedback to students and teachers. Teachers make informed adjustments to curriculum and instruction so that all students demonstrate increased mastery.

Supporting Evidence

- The vast majority of teachers use assessments that align to the Common Core and the schoolwide curricula. In addition school leaders meet monthly with grade-level team leaders, grades kindergarten through grade five, to review the efficacy of assessments in monitoring student progress. Prior to the beginning of school year 2018 to 2019, the Data Inquiry team met to analyze grade level data, including Fountas and Pinnell (F&P) data. As a result, a decision was made to adopt the <i>Journeys</i> reading curriculum to support students who had not mastered reading skills such as identifying sight words. Additionally, teacher teams added on-demand writing assessments to progress monitor student writing to determine the effectiveness of the writing curricula and make adjustments to lessons, such as the addition of learning maps. Similarly, teachers disaggregated the data by ability range and assigned students to instructional groups in the classroom or identified students for additional targeted intensive interventions and supports by intervention staff. Consequently, staff receive actionable and meaningful feedback regarding student progress toward mastery in literacy.

- Teachers use a variety of assessments to create a clear picture of student progress across grades and subjects. Tracked data identifies students who are performing at, below and above benchmark, and guides teachers to develop interventions that accelerate learning for all students. Grade level teams analyze F&P reading assessment data to determine instructional groupings and provide them with leveled books. Additionally, Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) teams use data to plan specialized individualized strategies for students with disabilities such as explicit small group instruction and chunking of text. As a result, the percentage of students with disabilities meeting proficiency on the State English Language Arts (ELA) exam doubled from 22 percent in 2017 to 44 percent in 2018.

- Teachers and teacher teams use a variety of assessments to inform adjustments to curricula and to plan scaffolds and activities that support all learners, including ELLs and student with disabilities. Item analyses of student constructed responses on the State ELA assessment and teacher-designed tests led to the collective decision to increase writing across the curricula via the adoption of quick writes to improve student ability to meet the rigors of the State ELA assessment. This included having students think meta-cognitively when applying writing and annotation strategies. A review of meeting minutes and agendas indicates that teacher teams meet frequently to review data and monitor student progress toward mastery and determine next steps to in implementing strategies for struggling students. These practices led to the improvement in the percentage of ELLs meeting proficiency on the State math exam from 13 percent in 2017 to 22 percent in 2018.
Additional Finding

| Quality Indicator: | 3.4 High Expectations | Rating: | Well Developed |

Findings

School leaders and faculty consistently communicate high expectations to students and their families and involve parents in their children’s learning. A culture of scholarship is maintained and communicated to all school community members.

Impact

Systems of accountability for students and partnerships with families ensure that all students and their families are aware of their progress toward college and career readiness. Effective communication and partnerships with families results in all students owning their learning so that they are prepared for the next level.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and faculty implement effective strategies for communicating high expectations about college and career readiness and partner with families to support their children in meeting and/or exceeding those expectations. Students and parents reported that they are aware of the expectations for the secondary level and college or a career and that regular updates on progress is provided through traditional means such as progress reports, report cards and parent-teacher conferences. The majority of teachers communicate academic and behavioral progress daily or in real time using email, ClassDojo, or a mobile application allowing them to text notifications to parents or to remind them of upcoming important events and activities. Parents stated that they use the progress reports and updates to monitor progress of their children toward meeting grade level academic expectations. Parents further reported that if their child is struggling in a class they are immediately notified, and their child is provided with additional support or academic intervention.

- The school’s leadership team and staff have a set of clear, systematic structures, such as one-on-one student conferencing, leadership goal setting and grade-level newsletters that ensures that students are aware of their progress toward meeting their literacy and math goals and being prepared for college and career. All students reported that they aware of the high expectations that the school leaders and teachers have set and feel that they are being adequately prepared for the next level. “The teachers prepare us well for the next grade and the State exams.” This is also evidenced by 99 percent of students deemed ready for the next level, as measured by the NYC Department of Education Next Level Readiness index. Fifth grade students also shared that they were provided with guidance and support in deciding where to apply to middle school, and had opportunities to visit prospective schools.

- There is an active partnership in place between the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and the school leadership and teachers. In response to parents’ request to provide clarity in student academic expectations and progress toward meeting the State standards at the primary level, the kindergarten and first grade teachers hosted additional curriculum workshops that were well attended by families. A review of correspondence from the school indicates that parents are regularly invited to learn how to support their children’s progress in reading, writing and math during workshops and curriculum events. Thus, parents reported that school leaders and teachers take an active role in partnering with families to ensure they are involved in their children’s education and that they are supported in helping their children meet grade level expectations.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Findings
Teacher teams use grade-level common planning time to analyze student data and engage in inquiry-based professional collaborations, embedding the Common Core into lesson plans and units of study.

Impact
Across grades, teacher teams’ use of a structured protocol to systematically analyze data and student work products has resulted in coherent implementation of the Common Core and instructional shifts, leading to strengthened teacher instructional capacity and improved student achievement.

Supporting Evidence

- The majority of teachers engage in professional collaboration to promote the implementation of the Common Core and adoption of identified instructional best practices and protocols to build schoolwide instructional coherence. The need for a stronger writing curricula across content areas led to teachers adopting on-demand writing protocols such as quick writes to promote additional writing opportunities for students across disciplines. The use of strategies such as learning maps helped students better organize their thoughts and plan their writing responses. Similarly, the instructional cabinet and teacher teams identified the use of exemplars and reciprocal teaching model as the most effective way to support the diversity of learners in the school, including students with disabilities.

- Grade level teacher teams meet weekly to analyze student assessment data and student work products to identify patterns and trends and devise strategies to help close identified achievement gaps. Use of a variety of progress monitoring tools, such as student observation and conference notes, exit tickets and end-of-unit assessments, determines changes to student groups for in-class targeted instruction or pull-out strategic reading interventions for students reading below grade level, helping them to meet benchmarks. Grade teams also consistently analyze and disaggregate data so members can plan scaffolds and additional individualized supports such as leveled texts to address student reading levels. Data also works to identify students in need of additional academic support via attendance at Saturday academies, so that they are well prepared for the State exam.

- Teachers reported analyzing conference notes, benchmark and end-of-unit tests, and formative assessments, such as exit tickets and quick writes, to determine if students were able to back their claims and counterclaims with sufficient supporting textual evidence when writing an argumentative essay. To ensure that all teachers were checking students’ ability to cite text evidence, teacher teams made the collective decision to explicitly state “with supporting text evidence” in the learning objective of the lesson across grades and subjects and observe students’ ability to do so. Teachers reported that teaching decisions “have resulted in more coherence in our instruction schoolwide.” Teachers further noted the positive impact the work of the teacher teams is having on improvements in teacher practice. One teacher commented that, “Because of our team work, we also make sure we spiral the critical skills students need and high leverage standards in our own classes so that students will be able to meet the grade level standards by the end of the year.” These practices resulted in a six percentage point increase in the number of students meeting proficiency on the State ELA assessment, from 66 percent in 2017 to 72 percent in 2018, 30 percent higher than the District average.