Quality Review Report

2018-2019

P.S./I.S. 045 Horace E. Greene

K-8 32K045

84 Schaefer Street
Brooklyn
NY 11207

Principal: Nadine Marshall

Dates of Review:
May 22, 2019 - May 23, 2019

Lead Reviewer: Debra Tasioudis
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**

### Instructional Core

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</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>
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<tr>
<td>1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the instructional shifts and Danielson Framework for Teaching, aligned to the curricula, engaging, and meets the needs of all learners so that all students produce meaningful work products</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.2 Align assessments to curricula, use on-going assessment and grading practices, and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom levels</td>
<td>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Developing</td>
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</table>
## School Quality Ratings continued

### 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</td>
<td><strong>Area of Celebration</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td><strong>Additional Finding</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- **1.4** Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that supports the academic and personal growth of students and adults
- **3.4** Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations

### Systems for Improvement

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

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<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td><strong>Additional Finding</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td><strong>Additional Finding</strong></td>
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<td>4.1</td>
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<td>4.2</td>
<td><strong>Additional Finding</strong></td>
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<td>5.1</td>
<td><strong>Additional Finding</strong></td>
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- **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
- **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
- **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
- **4.2** Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning
- **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
Area of Celebration

| Quality Indicator: | 1.4 Positive Learning Environment | Rating: | Well Developed |

Findings

Structures, including feelings check-ins and restorative circles along with close relationships between teachers and students are in place. The school community strategically aligns professional learning, family outreach, and student learning experiences and supports.

Impact

Personalized interventions, routines, and supports help students learn positive behaviors and result in the adoption of effective academic and personal behaviors.

Supporting Evidence

- Structures are in place so that all students are known well by at least one adult. The school regularly schedules time for social-emotional learning structures, such as feelings check-ins and restorative circles to allow students to practice naming and discussing feelings, and surface conflict. This creates time, either in the morning or after lunch, depending on the day, for students to build relationships with classroom teachers, practice naming their emotions and engaging in conflict resolution with teachers and peers. In a meeting with students, several identified this as a way that they feel known by and get support from their teachers. As one student shared, “My teacher knows me well and I benefit from it because she helps me with my problems.” Similarly, another student identified a related service provider that they see daily, and shared that she has known her since she was little and she helps me find solutions to my problems. For middle school students, there is a restorative approach to discipline and problem solving. As a student shared, “We have a lot of support and so many people that we can go to talk. If we are having trouble at home or at school, they really sit with us and try to help us work out our problems. We are well cared for.” Students appreciate that the school’s dean, parent coordinator and guidance counselors discipline, but more importantly invite students and their families to talk through issues and find solutions.

- There are weekly attendance meetings that include school leaders, an attendance family worker, a district attendance teacher, the dean and teachers. The team supports students across the school, with a focus on assisting families in need of permanent housing, meeting with parents and community-based organizations to align needed supports. The team implements a schoolwide incentive program for increased and perfect attendance that includes a student of the month for each class, with smaller incentives such as pencils for the lower grades and in middle school grades wake-up calls for those students who need this personalization. The team has structured the day to begin with festivities, including the school pledge and a time to recognize students. At the time of the review, data indicates the number of students with a 90 percent attendance rate increased by three percent from the previous year, and the rate of tardiness has declined.

- In a meeting with parents, there was praise for school leaders and staff in providing support for families, especially for attendance and holding healthy eating habits and cooking classes. Parents shared that personal phone calls and one-on-one meetings with staff are common, as are home visits to further support families in improving student attendance and other challenges they face. Parents were quick to praise the school’s workshops for families, the opportunities to have breakfast and discuss concerns, and other times to participate in a series of workshops on healthy cooking or mental health. For staff there is ongoing professional learning centered on the school’s social-emotional learning program. This year fifteen staff members engaged in restorative approach training to support students in conflict. Additionally, the school has partnered with another city agency to provide ongoing sessions regarding stress management and self-care for teachers and staff. The strategically aligned professional learning sessions along with effective implementation of the program has resulted in a decrease in student incidents this school year.
Area of Focus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>2.2 Assessment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Developing</th>
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Findings
Teachers use rubrics and written comments to students, common assessments, and ask questions to check for understanding in the classroom.

Impact
Students and teachers receive feedback that is not as yet always actionable limiting their understanding of how to improve their performance. Results from common assessments and checks for understanding are inconsistently used to adjust curricula and instruction across all grades thus not always meeting student-learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- At the student meeting all students shared pieces of their work that was graded, often with a rubric, with actionable feedback. Most of the students could read and understand their feedback. Despite the actionable feedback only a few shared that they make use of their actionable feedback. For one student, her next step was to read her writing aloud before submitting it helping her to find small errors, a practice she now uses before submitting work. In those classrooms where student work was posted some work was graded with feedback to students while some work was displayed without grades or teacher feedback. This limited feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement.

- School leaders conduct data meetings with teachers to discuss student progress on common assessments and instructional and curricular adjustments needed to increase student achievement. In data conference notes, it is evident that teachers review several common assessment results, including state and local English Language Arts (ELA) and math exams, unit assessments and leveled reading assessments. These notes, and other planning materials demonstrate clear adjustments to curricular and instructional practices from the use of the leveled reading assessments. This is particularly so in the lower grades, where teachers group students for reading and assign Common Core standards of focus and match instructional strategies to student need. For common assessment analysis in other subjects the adjustments to curricula and instruction are less clear, as the standards of focus or needed additions or adjustments to teaching practices are not reflected in curricular planning documents.

- Across classes, teachers check for understanding during instruction, usually through questioning, and some use a tracker to note student thinking or student achievement during the lesson. However, only some teachers used this data to make on-the-spot adjustments to meet student-learning needs. In an ELA lesson, the teacher circulated throughout the room asking students questions to gage their understanding of the text. In a science lesson, the teacher offered students a rubric to self-assess, and asked students questions as they worked through an experiment addressing muscle fatigue. Though the teacher circulated throughout the room asking questions, several groups conducted the experiment taking turns invalidating the data collected. Redirection to correct their procedure was not observed, missing an opportunity to make an effective adjustment to ensure student understanding. In a math lesson, the teacher reviewed a concept, inviting a few of the students to share their thinking. While much of the lesson review focused on this concept, many students had the question correct, making this an effective adjustment for some students, while validating the understanding of others.
Additional Finding

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

The curricula align to the Common Core, with a focus on students citing evidence from text and deep understanding in math. Academic tasks consistently emphasize rigorous habits.

Impact

The curricula promote college readiness and are accessible for all learners.

Supporting Evidence

- Through data conversation cycles with administrators teachers review class data from New York State Exams and other common assessments connected to the Common Core standards. In these meetings, and in the teacher team meetings, teachers make purposeful decisions to focus on particular Common Core standards, demonstrated in units and lesson plans. For example, a lesson planned for an eighth grade lesson on figurative language included alignment to three Common Core standards for reading literature, speaking and listening and use of language. The lesson also aligned with the school’s focus on close reading and annotating text to support students in using text-based evidence. Similarly, a math lesson aligned to a single Common Core standard for displaying numerical data in plots on a number line, and included guided practice on carefully reading each section of the word problem. Decisions such as these advance the building of coherence across the grades and have students think about the steps in a problem before beginning computation.

- Units follow a similar format and include standards of focus, skills to be explicitly taught, vocabulary, some of the unit’s learning activities, and assessments. A social studies unit on the role of belief systems in a society closely aligned to one Common Core standard for determining the central idea and summarizing primary and secondary sources. Another social studies unit on understanding how culture, geography and history shape a community included many Common Core standards. Pacing calendars for math and phonics demonstrate areas of focus and strategic integration of instructional shifts and coherence across the grades.

- Lesson plans consistently emphasize rigor through the purposeful inclusion of questions, scaffolds and supports for all students, including students with disabilities and English Language Learners (ELLs). A math plan included teacher modeling, explicit vocabulary instruction, an anchor chart to support problem solving, and planned questions to ensure that students understand the task and how to interpret the data. An ELA plan on making inferences about the theme of a text includes questions about the text to support students in understanding its theme, a bank of common themes found in literature, frontloading of vocabulary in the text, differentiated graphic organizers, and student-facing rubrics for crafting responses to literature from which students are to choose. These supports to help students develop written arguments, annotate and discuss texts with peers were common in lesson plans, emphasizing rigorous habits for all learners.

- Teachers and school leaders regularly review tasks together, and revise them with a focus on the use of higher-order questioning. One revised math task asks students to not only solve a problem using number and operations in base ten, but also to restate the question, use an addition equation and write their answer in standard form, ensuring that students practice higher order skills. This focus on questioning in tasks was evident in task revisions shared from all subject areas.
## Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices align to the belief that students learn best through use of the workshop model. Teaching strategies consistently provide multiple entry points, such as graphic organizers, access to the thinking of peers, anchor charts, student models, and manipulatives.

## Impact

All learners are engaged in challenging classroom tasks that demonstrate higher-order thinking.

## Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, teaching practices align with the shared belief that students learn best when the learning targets are clearly posted, and include a skill and strategy that students observe the teacher model, the class practices together, and then students work independently, with scaffolds and supports. This process, known as the learning model, was observed in an ELA class, where students were asked to make inferences about a text, using a summarizing strategy. Through a read aloud, the teacher modeled a strategy for questioning the text, and then engaged students in a guided discussion of *Charlotte’s Web*, before students worked in small groups. The teacher provided students with the questions that she used in her model on the board for students to reference, and provided an anchor chart on a summarizing technique. Students were expected to engage with peers as they worked. This allowed students to demonstrate higher-order thinking in discussions and written responses to the text. This use of the workshop model was common in classes across the grades.

- In math and science, the lesson opens with inquiry, where the students observe and wonder on their own, before explicit instruction on a skill and opportunities to practice the skill with teacher guidance and independent practice. In a math lesson on constructing rectangles and determining area using the given perimeter, students worked in small groups, using manipulatives to determine area. Students talked with one another about their strategies, as the teacher circulated from group to group, making their thinking visible to one another verbally and on their desktops. The teacher then had the class come back together to review the mini-lesson, and probed students for understanding and misconceptions. Students then demonstrated higher thinking in the ways they problem solved using the provided scaffolds and supports.

- Across classes, teachers provided students with discussion opportunities, differentiated tasks, and graphic organizers to support their thinking and writing, anchor charts, student models, and manipulatives. In one science class, students also received copies of the task in Spanish or Arabic. In a math lesson, students worked to solve word problems discussing their thinking with peers, using calculators, along with clear steps on a student-friendly checklist, and completed examples to help support their thinking. Supports such as these were common across classes to ensure that all learners, including students with disabilities and ELLs engaged in appropriately challenging tasks and demonstrate higher-order thinking skills.
Additional Finding

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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Findings
School leaders regularly communicate expectations to staff, with an emphasis on the use of the workshop model and data to adjust curricula and instruction. Teachers and school staff communicate clear expectations to families.

Impact
Teachers have supports to achieve clear expectations. Teachers work closely with parents to support student progress.

Supporting Evidence

- The school leaders consistently communicate high expectations to teachers and staff through the use of a staff handbook, memos, and data conferences with teachers. Expectations such as the use of the workshop model, maintaining portfolios of student work and assessments, and using professional time for collaborative planning, grading student work, mentoring and developing Individualized Education Programs are clearly communicated to teachers in memos, and reinforced in team and professional learning time. Professional learning session records indicate a system of training to support teachers in developing lessons aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. The workshop model, creating classroom structures to support the social-emotional development of students, and planning to meet the needs of diverse students are included as well. Data conference expectations are made clear to teachers through beginning of the year professional learning, and provide a time for school leaders to hold teachers accountable for these expectations, beyond classroom observations. Teachers shared that while the data conferences are not a new, there is now a new sense of clarity about how teachers are expected to use data from common assessments to identify trends and patterns and to assist them in tailoring the curricula and instruction. As a result of the clarification of these expectations teachers are creating new ways to share their data with the school leaders, and are asking new questions and approaching the use of data in new ways.

- School leaders use an environmental checklist to observe expected classroom structures, such as classroom libraries, use of anchor charts, sentence starters and discussion protocols, and the creation of bulletin boards. The school leaders provide individual teachers with feedback and next steps for improving these structures. A memo is sent to teachers regarding the findings of the classroom environment walkthroughs to ensure clarity for all teachers across the school.

- School leaders and staff consistently communicate with caregivers about student progress using progress reports, report cards and four parent-teacher conferences. There is frequently used parent engagement time on Tuesday afternoons, or time scheduled with teachers as requested. During the review, parents praised the ease of communication with teachers in person, by telephone, email, texting, or with online applications. School leaders and staff send home letters to families, such as monthly newsletters, detailing the curricula, upcoming events for families and students, and expectations for reading, writing and math. At parent workshops parents receive information about the Common Core and the ways in which they can assist their child. Parents shared that if there is something their child cannot figure out in their homework, and no one in the family can help, they just send a note and the child is not penalized. They appreciate that the teacher will send home additional materials for the student and family to try together. Parents also praised the parent coordinator, known as "the mother of the school" who helps to coordinate with teachers and the guidance counselors to support students and families in ensuring student success.
Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in inquiry, where they consistently analyze data and student work for students they share. Distributive leadership structures are in place.

Impact

Inquiry meetings strengthen and improve the instructional capacity of teachers, and result in progress toward goals for groups of students. The professional learning team gives teachers a voice in key decisions that affect student learning across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- During the review, an upper-grade ELA team was observed engaging in inquiry work aligned to school goals. The teachers focused on improving instruction for grade six students, with implications for curricular and instructional adjustments for all upper-grade students. Aligned with the school's goal of deepening lesson planning practices that support students creating evidence-based arguments in their writing, a review of their inquiry binder revealed research conducted by the team to support teachers in identifying research-based strategies to best support their students. The team's binder demonstrates two cycles of inquiry, in which teachers have tried out four strategies for helping students to improve their writing. In this cycle, teachers focused on annotation strategies, differentiating questioning and annotating strategies for different groups of students. Teachers reviewed student work for evidence of annotation and use of evidence in their writing. Students' short responses were reviewed by the group as well as the conference notes taken during writing lessons. Through this work, the team promotes the achievement of the school's goals, and the Common Core, strengthening the instructional capacity of teachers as they engage in collaborative analysis of student work and planning instructional next steps.

- The team’s work demonstrates that they consistently track a group of students’ progress over time. Sixteen sixth graders, including students with disabilities, ELLs, high and lower achieving students from all of the sixth-grade classes were studied. During the first cycle the focus was on building vocabulary skills through use of context clues. The second was on annotation and questioning of the text. In both, the team looked at one Common Core standard and used a pre- and post-unit assessment to track progress toward goals for the group of students. While a review of data from the binder demonstrates tracking of progress toward goals for students, there is not as yet evidence of increased achievement for all learners. Similarly, a third grade binder demonstrates a similar inquiry process, with evidence that teams break up into ELA and math groups and focus on improving instructional strategies and tasks within units.

- The school has a professional learning team that includes ten teacher leaders who actively engage in shaping professional learning across the school. The inquiry teams rotate facilitators to ensure that teachers develop leadership skills, and have different experiences engaging in the use of protocol-based discussions, and practices in place in classrooms across the school. Through the professional learning team and inquiry, teachers have a voice in key decisions, including the development and selection of instructional strategies, and in some subjects, such as ELA and math, the selection of curricular resources, positively affecting student learning.