Quality Review Report

2018-2019

P.S. 054 Samuel C. Barnes
Elementary 13K054
195 Sandford Street
Brooklyn
NY 11205

Principal: Anthony Pirro

Dates of Review:
November 28, 2018 - November 29, 2018

Lead Reviewer: Kevin Bradley
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. 054 Samuel C. Barnes 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>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 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>
</tr>
</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>
# Area of Celebration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.4 Positive Learning Environment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

## Findings

The school’s approach to culture-building, discipline, and social-emotional support values student voice through student council and it aligns family outreach and student learning experiences to the needs of students.

## Impact

The safe and inclusive culture is conducive to student and adult learning and promotes the adoption of effective academic and personal behaviors.

## Supporting Evidence

- Junior Coaches is a student leadership opportunity whereby students in grades four to five help kindergarten to grade three students in the cafeteria and during recess by running games. This program is done in conjunction with Playworks, a community-based organization that supports learning and physical health by providing safe and inclusive play. In addition, a peer-to-peer lunch program connects a student with leadership skills to a “buddy” with special needs. They play together at recess as peer models. In addition, student voice is valued through a student council, and at its recommendation morning announcements were implemented to give students additional leadership opportunities with students rotating and sharing responsibility for making the daily announcements. Student council also setup a recycling program in the lunch room, chose the school colors and designed spirit week events. A student reported that students use a box in the PTA room to submit suggestions for school improvement. Consequently, there is a safe environment and inclusive culture that was confirmed by students during the student meeting.

- The school partners with Green Generations, a community-based organization, which functions as an intervention to support and celebrate positive student behaviors and promote the adoption of effective academic and social behaviors. Green Generations works with students in small groups on self-monitoring. Students create a goal, they track that goal and whether or not they make progress, while reinforcing that the students are working on self-regulating. Habits of Mind units of study are integrated into grades three to five with a focus on promoting a growth mindset, perseverance and problem-solving behaviors. Family outreach occurs with consistency through the use of ClassDoJo, a platform that helps families understand student progress both academically and socially-emotionally. During the meeting with parents, a parent reported how she leverages ClassDoJo points at school as a motivation for positive behavior at home.

- The school aligns professional development and social emotional learning support through Therapeutic Crisis Intervention in Schools (TCIS) training that was provided to 50 percent of teachers and paraprofessionals to support them in learning multiple ways to acknowledge, prevent and/or de-escalate crisis situations. Across the school, TCIS has created consistency of behavioral expectations, common language, steps to problem solving, and de-escalation of students. As an outgrowth, the school is now part of a pilot program that engages the entire staff in training in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention in Schools by the end of the year, which began in September by teachers who were trained prior in TCIS turn keying the information to the entire staff. Teachers have also received professional development in the Responsive Classroom, with a focus on Morning Message/Morning Meeting to set the tone and expectations for the day and build a community in the classroom. Additional measures such as Take a Break, Chair/Cozy Corner, Flow of the day, movement breaks, and closing circle expectations and rules allow students to know what is expected of them throughout the day. Quiet time and logical consequences, you break it, you fix it; loss of privilege and time-out, are further supports for promoting student academic and personal behaviors.
Area of Focus

| Quality Indicator: | 1.2 Pedagogy | Rating: | Developing |

Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are beginning to reflect a set of beliefs about how students learn best via small group instruction and station teaching that is informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching and the instructional shifts. Students show their thinking through discussions.

Impact

There were missed opportunities to increase engagement and independence in some classrooms. Student work products and discussions reflect uneven levels of thinking and participation.

Supporting Evidence

- During a second-grade project based learning task, there were five groups of students, one of which worked directly with the paraprofessional while the teacher rotated throughout the other groups checking in with the students. Students were tasked with telling their opinion about a cave; however they were repeating the author’s opinion and not necessarily that of their own. Although there was a word wall to serve as a resource, the word wall required students to move to see the words because the distance was too far for them to read the words. Students with disabilities seemed to struggle with the writing and did not get as far as other students in the class. During a first-grade dual language reading class, groups of students worked with teachers. One group worked on sight words, one on guided reading strategies, and other students sat with their peers on buddy reading and using portable word walls. Thus, only in some classrooms were there evidence of teaching practices that reflected the articulated belief that students learn best when engaged in small groups and station teaching.

- During a third grade writing lesson, the teacher did a mini-lesson on table of contents, as she modeled with her own example. Students had the opportunity to turn-and-talk with partners about what they are going to do with their writing. However, students did not display their table of contents while the mini-lesson was happening, therefore missing the opportunity to connect the topic of the mini-lesson with the task they were asked to do, nor was the table of contents posted for the entire time so that students could reference it. In a kindergarten class, students were effectively transitioning between stations while the teachers worked with small groups of students. However, some students in the classroom were off task due to behavioral issues. During a second grade class, students worked in small groups on writing tasks that included academic language and they used checklists and resources. Three of the groups were working with adults who helped and guided the writing. Student leaders were working with pairs on writing and peer checking their work. The teacher asked students from different groups to share out what they learned and only one student could clearly articulate her work with her peer connected to her goals. Another student struggled to answer the teacher’s questions. Nor was the teacher’s modeled example of writing from earlier in the lesson accessible to students as a resource later during the lesson.

- During a fifth-grade math class, students sat in data-based groups, and all adults in the room had an assigned group. Students worked on an I Do problem, with the teacher asking “How do we find area?” Students then used white boards as they were multiplying with decimals to respond. The teacher asked the students to hold up their white boards and she scanned the room. Some of the students in the room either did not have the correct answer or did not finish the problem, yet there was no related discussion of who had a different answer and why. Students did not have an opportunity to help each other with the answers prior to a whole group share or discussion. As a result, engagement in active discussions and conversation was limited.
Additional Finding

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

Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards, State content standards and the instructional shifts. Curricula and tasks are planned and refined using student work and data.

Impact

Purposeful decisions ensure that curricula promote college and career readiness for all students via project- based learning units. Faculty members adjust lesson plans by providing task-specific supports so that a diversity of learners have access and are cognitively engaged with tasks.

Supporting Evidence

- The school has all grade levels participate in two units of project based learning (PBL) per school year that includes an inquiry focus and a culminating project. For example, a second grade PBL unit is Exploring Earth’s Treasures – Rocks, Minerals, and Soils that includes a culminating project of soil remediation. A fourth-grade unit on Got Water? – Saving Water One Drop at a Time, has students doing a culminating project of designing and re-engineering an effective rainwater harvesting system. The PBL units build coherence and the real world components promote college and career readiness for all students.

- The integration of the math instructional shifts in fluency and application is apparent in curricular documents. In a kindergarten math workshop lesson plan, students are asked to sort and classify buttons by how many holes or by design. In a fifth-grade math lesson plan, students use an application problem involving multiplying decimals by multi-digit whole numbers using an area model. Curricular documents also include assignments evidencing integration of the English Language Arts (ELA) instructional shifts in balancing informational and literacy text along with academic vocabulary. For example, in a second-grade reading lesson plan, students are reading a non-fiction text, Knights in Shining Armor, and connecting their understanding with academic vocabulary such as “castle.” A third-grade reading workshop lesson plan is designed to teach students to recognize and read sight words quickly by reading the word wall to reinforce academic vocabulary in connection to building literacy skills.

- Based on quarterly formal assessments, a reading lesson plan for kindergarten includes students rotating among stations for English as a New Language (ENL) push-in support for English Language Learners (ELLs), and groupings of students. Specific students’ Individualized Education Plans (IEP) goals are included in the lesson plan to inform teachers of relevant groupings. A second-grade writing lesson includes refinement based on student performance data with a list of students with IEPs identified by name, along with specific skills and expectations they will receive from the grade-level content teacher and the ICT teacher during the lesson. A fifth-grade math lesson was adjusted based on exit slips and informal observations from the previous day’s lesson and includes targeted students for practice, guided support, and independent work around differentiated tasks focusing on multiplying decimals and whole numbers based on need as identified via student data.
Additional Finding

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

Findings

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

Impact

Feedback to students regarding student achievement is inconsistent and limited. Teachers inconsistently utilize checks for understanding to adjust instruction.

Supporting Evidence

- During the student meeting students provided work that reflected some evidence of teacher feedback that contained specific comments related to grammatical errors and punctuation. Examples included, “Good job picking a small moment and writing small detail!”, and “Make sure your representation is correct.” However, much of the student work contained no feedback or feedback lacking clarity to effectively guide the student toward improvement with actionable next steps, such as “Go back and reread the passages.” When asked during the student meeting, a student shared, “I don't get feedback from my teachers that often, I get feedback from them sometimes.” When asked for additional comments, all other students present at the meeting agreed. Thus feedback to students is limited and lacks action.

- Some of the student work brought to the student meeting did not include rubrics, and the ones included had limited feedback from teachers. During the student meeting, only two of eight students had rubrics with them and could speak how they use the rubrics. A majority of the students in the student meeting did not have any comments to add to the discussion and generally could not speak to their use of rubrics in their classes. The use of rubrics is limited and is not used to provide effective feedback.

- Checks for understanding were inconsistently utilized during the classes observed. In some classes, teachers circulated throughout the room to check-in with students at times during the lesson, although this practice did not occur across most of the classes. In some classes, questions were asked to the whole class and sometimes a few students would respond without any clear indication if the entire class understood the correct answer. There was also limited evidence of student self-assessment or peer-assessment. During the student interview, students reported inconsistent use of student self-assessment, and only one student mentioned using self-assessment in one of her classes. Overall, teachers did not make effective adjustments in the moment of instruction.
Additional Finding

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

Findings

School leaders consistently convey high expectations to staff through ongoing feedback and professional learning aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. The school provides ongoing information to families regarding student progress towards college and career readiness.

Impact

Ongoing communication and support by school leaders based on classroom visits support teachers’ understanding and awareness of expectations around teaching and learning. Communication from school leaders and teachers provides opportunities for families to understand their children’s progress towards meeting standards.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders conduct frequent classroom observations and provide feedback utilizing the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* as the standard for professionalism and high quality instruction. Feedback from school leadership on observation reports supports high expectations regarding co-teaching, for example, “Plan out your co-teaching models and small group instruction to increase student independence and to maximize your instructional time as a co-teaching team.” Follow up classroom observation reports detail ongoing accountability of high expectations of teachers.

- The principal uses a wide variety of ways to share expectations with staff. Daily notes via email cover details about student learning objectives that must be displayed for each lesson with the daily flow. All teachers are expected to use the format "I can... by ..." and refer to it regularly so students know to use it as a learning tool. Bulletin board expectations include a brief description of the task, the rubric or checklist used and feedback that includes compliments and next steps. Measures of student learning assessments are scored and submitted to administrators, and results from running records must be input into the TC Assessment Pro. This allows the most recent independent reading data for each student to be shared by grade level and by subgroups. In addition, teachers receive a staff handbook that covers a wide variety of expectations ranging from professional responsibilities and instructional expectations. A professional development plan makes clear that school leaders support teachers in their understanding of expectations in addressing topics, such as TCIS, Exploring Use of Explicit Instruction, Guided Reading, and Algebra for All.

- Parents are informed of high expectations about the curriculum, instruction and learning goals, and their children’s social-emotional development through ClassDoJo. Each class relays this information via their own web page and parents reported that they can see updates as to their children’s progress in real time. Specifically, ClassDojo celebrates student achievement through community sharing of images, videos and written messages, as well as through a point system. As a result, academic progress towards meeting high expectations is tracked by parents to monitor their children’s achievement. The app also has led to an increase in parent engagement and communication and positive reinforcement for students.
Additional Finding

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

Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations that promote achievement of school goals and implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards. Distributed leadership structures are in place with model teachers as part of the school’s Learning Partners Program (LPP).

Impact

Teachers’ collaborations have strengthened their instructional capacity. Across the school, teachers have built leadership capacity and have a voice in key decisions that affect student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- The observed kindergarten inquiry team meeting looked at the end-of-unit informational writing tasks using the Teachers College Reading and Writing Program rubric as a guide. The team started with one example that they normed and calibrated. Then they worked through the rest of the student assignments individually and collaborated when they had a question. They talked briefly about next steps for individual students. One teacher recorded the group’s findings on a Google Doc. A teacher reported, “We use the results of our inquiry team work to plan for small groups, as we look at end-of-unit on-demand writing. We look at running records together, and it informs our writing on-demand planning back in our classrooms.”

- Teacher teams meet in cross grade level (XGL) teams weekly on Fridays, as kindergarten-first grade, second-third grade, and fourth-fifth grade. XGL teams focus on reviewing student work, student assessment results, and plan cross-grade units of study and lessons. Teachers reported on the various formats of their weekly XGL meetings and indicated that once a month they do an examination of writing on demand for a unit, other weeks teachers bring math or other content work to assess, and they enter data from their XGL teacher team meetings on Google docs to allow for ongoing analysis and review. Thus, the work of the teacher teams promotes the achievement of school goals and the implementation of Common Core Learning Standards.

- Distributed leadership was evidenced by model teacher leaders’ representation in the Learning Partners Program (LPP). The school is in year three as a partner school in the LPP with a yearlong problem of practice focused on student engagement and how to create a more supportive learning environment through small group instruction, specifically station teaching. One model teacher from fifth-grade supports upper grade teachers, and another model teacher is from kindergarten and supports primary grade teachers with a focus aligned to the Danielson domain of student engagement via small group instruction. The model teachers host intervisitations for teachers around station teaching as well as support classroom management, classroom environment and structures and routines for student independence. Teachers have built leadership capacity and have voice in key decisions, such as the Metamorphosis Math Pilot, that affects student learning across the school.