Quality Review Report

2018-2019

P.S. 099 Isaac Asimov

K-8 21K099

1120 East 10 Street
Brooklyn
NY 11230

Principal: Gregory Pirraglia

Dates of Review:
May 29, 2019 - May 30, 2019

Lead Reviewer: Yolanda Martin
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. 099 Isaac Asimov serves students in grade PK through grade 8. You will find information about this school, including enrollment, attendance, student demographics, and data regarding academic performance, at http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/tools/report/default.htm.

School Quality Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To what extent does the school…</td>
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<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>Area of Focus</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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
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### School Quality Ratings continued

#### School Culture

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<th>Area</th>
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**To what extent does the school...**

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1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that supports the academic and personal growth of students and adults

Additional Finding | Well Developed

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<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations

Area of Celebration | Well Developed

#### Systems for Improvement

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

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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

Additional Finding | Well Developed

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<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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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

Additional Finding | Proficient

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<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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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

Additional Finding | Proficient

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<th>Area</th>
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4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning

Additional Finding | Well Developed

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<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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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

Additional Finding | Proficient
Area of Celebration

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

Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations and provide professional development (PD) to the entire staff and work with teachers collectively as a team. Teacher teams and staff establish a culture for learning that conveys a unified set of high expectations for all students.

Impact

Communication and professional development around high expectations contribute toward a culture of mutual accountability. Clear and effective feedback and support ensures that all students, including high-need groups, own their educational experience and are prepared for the next steps and beyond.

Supporting Evidence

- Through daily classroom interactions with teachers and students, lesson observations, weekly grade conferences, PD sessions, assemblies, and the staff handbook, school leaders communicate high expectations. These documents contain information aligned with the Danielson Framework for Teaching, including sections on professional responsibilities, classroom practices inclusive of expectations for assessing student learning, and the school's grading policy.

- School leaders and staff work collectively as a team in study groups, in professional collaborations inclusive of students to establish a culture of professionalism and support that result in a high level of success in teaching and learning across the school. After a PD cycle, teachers shared that they conducted intervisitations of each other’s classroom to see the implementation of the strategies and resources shared and to provide feedback. Teachers shared their involvement in creating structures that support high expectations for the school community. For example, a teacher shared that they discussed with administration different classroom approaches to addressing students’ academic challenges and behavior. As a result, PD on restorative practices led to implementing some of the strategies across the school, creating a culture that supports high expectations. School leaders also meet with every eighth-grade student who demonstrated a need for additional support to illicit ways the school could be more supportive of their needs and helping them meet the established expectations. As a result of these meetings, the school has started an early morning program to support students who expressed the need for additional support to meet the school's expectations for learning.

- Staff has established a culture for learning that provides all students with focused, effective feedback, including next steps promoting student accountability for their learning that prepares them for the next grade. Written feedback consistently provides next instructional steps and includes a self-reflection by the student on how they plan to improve their work. In a class that supports English Language Learners (ELLs), students were required to interpret the meaning of a mindset quote and apply the quotes to their real life. Students received feedback that included next steps and included a self-reflection on their progress as writers. Also, a piece of student work demonstrates a student receiving the highest rating on an American Revolution essay and commendations on the student's growth in becoming a more detailed and authentic writer, while also pushing the student to look at grammar. The student also indicated in their reflection that they wanted to write a stronger conclusion on their next essay. In addition, students commented frequently on the work they are currently completing in order to prepare for the next grade. One third-grade student is currently doing fourth-grade math and their teacher sent a letter to their parents letting them know what to expect in fourth grade. Several other students agreed that their teacher is also giving them math for the next grade level and they are getting prepared for writing essays in the fifth grade, being able to speak about the expectations of the next grade.
Area of Focus

<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 school leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and content standards and integrate the instructional shifts. Curricula and tasks emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills for diverse learners.

Impact
While there is a consistent focus on the citation of text-based evidence in curricula, the strategic integration of the instructional shifts has not yet resulted in coherence across grades and subjects. Also, while rigorous habits and higher-order skills are embedded in some curricula and tasks, some unit plans and lesson plans did not require all learners to demonstrate their thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- Curricular documents evidence alignment with the Common Core and instructional shifts. For example, students are required to show perspective by using a two-voice poem citing textual evidence and analyzing how an author develops and contrast points of view of characters in a grade-eight English Language Arts (ELA) lesson plan. Additionally, in a second-grade lesson plan, students are expected to deepen their understanding of two-dimensional shapes, as they are required to build and construct two-dimensional shapes using patterns and blocks. In a fifth-grade lesson plan, students are tasked with applying concepts of mapping and finding distance using coordinate planes to real-world situations traveling from one location in their neighborhood to the next. The ELA shifts focused on writing that cites textual evidence to support claims are consistently integrated. For example, in a grade-seven and grade-eight ELA unit plan, students are asked to evaluate and cite evidence to support their argument. However, apart from the coherent integration of requiring students to respond to literature using textual evidence, inconsistent strategic integration of any other instructional shift does not yet result in coherence across the grades and content areas.

- Curricula and academic tasks consistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order thinking skills for ELLs and students with disabilities. For example, a second-grade ELA lesson plan tasks students with identifying the main idea and key elements of a fairytale. To support with reading comprehension, scaffolds for this lesson included multi-leveled stories aligned to students' Lexile reading levels and a vocabulary review to support students with a disability in comprehending the text thus, emphasizing rigorous habits and higher-order skills. Additionally, a math Integrated Co-teaching (ICT) lesson plan tasks students with solving real-life math problems using money. This lesson plan details differentiated word problems and specific manipulatives for groups of students and a guided practice for students who receive ICT services and for ELLs.

- Other unit and lesson plans reviewed did not coherently embed rigorous habits and higher-order thinking skills for ELLs or students who have a disability. For example, a lesson plan for English as a New Language (ENL) instruction tasks students with reading A Spy by Chance and discuss the text as underlined in the teacher’s unit plan absent of higher-order thinking skills or the implementation of rigorous habits thus, limiting students from opportunities to demonstrate their thinking.
Additional Finding

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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.2 Pedagogy</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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Findings

Across the vast majority of the classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect the shared belief that students learn best when engaged in small-group instruction and cooperative learning. Students are engaged in thoughtful discussions across these classrooms.

Impact

Shared beliefs about how students learn best lead to learning activities that engage students in challenging tasks that sustain high levels of critical thinking, collaborative problem solving, and student ownership of discussions and work products.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers facilitate lessons in which students were highly engaged and actively participating in cooperative learning and student-to-student discussions. In a grade-four math class in which students receive ICT services, student leaders facilitated mathematical discourse as they worked in groups solving differentiated real-world problems. For example, one group was given the task to find out how four friends would equally spend eight dollars and seventy-five cents. Another group used the act-it-out protocol to solve their problem; students solved the problem individually and then collectively decided on the best method and charted their mathematical representation of the problem. During a grade-two reading lesson, students discussed the essential question, “How can we use evidence from the text to answer questions about the story Cinderella?” Students then led group discussions citing text-based evidence that supported their claim on why they thought that Cinderello’s brother was mean to him. One student said “I think they were mean to him because he was a good pitcher; it said he got every boy out.”

- Students are demonstrating high levels of thinking across grades and subjects. For example, during a grade-four social studies lesson, students were discussing the essential question “What is freedom?” and were tasked with analyzing different excerpts from the preamble to the Constitution of the United States discussing their interpretations, and applying it to current events taking place in society and how they would change policy and laws. In the same class, one group analysis interpreted the excerpt regarding all men are created equal to mean as a student shared “everyone should be treated equally and no one should show favoritism”, and then explained that while the laws were written back then, groups of people are still treated unequal and there is favoritism with things like immigration and who gets to come to America.” During a kindergarten math lesson, students used daily classroom objects to learn measurement and engaged in discussion with their peers about their thinking One group measured markers, pencils, and an eraser and explained how they determined the length and engaged in a discussion on why the length of the pencil is greater than the marker.

- Across grades and subjects, there was evidence of student ownership of their learning. In a grade-eight ELA class, students created graphic novel books based on the perspective on how the last chapter of their book should have ended. Additionally, students created book reviews for their peers giving their perspective of the story and their recommendations for readings based on interest. In another class, students were tasked with writing a story about a dream they had and then creating an illustration and children’s book based on their dream. One student wrote from the perspective of a dream he had in which he was biracial and ran for president and created a new America for all. This level of student ownership was also evident in an upper-grade bridge class in which students who receive self-contained services were required to conduct a text-based character analysis essay on The Tell-Tale Heart by Edgar Allan Poe, describing evidence that support their claim of the main character’s level of insanity.
Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers use rubrics and assessments that are aligned to the school’s curricula and provide a clear representation of student mastery. Assessment practices reflect varied and consistent use of modeling, mid-lesson reteach, and student self-assessment cards as some of ongoing checks for understanding.

Impact

Teachers provide students with actionable and meaningful feedback regarding their progress and achievement. Teachers ensure that students understand and complete tasks correctly by making in-the-moment effective adjustments to instruction.

Supporting Evidence

- Meaningful feedback is evident the student work reviewed across grades and subjects. Feedback offered to students on a grade-two science assignment on the water cycle asks them to provide additional information for each phase of the cycle, make sure they are putting the correct information in each phase, and to check their grammar. Feedback on a grade-four fraction comparison project commended students for using the strategy of cross multiplication to compare fractions, but encouraged students to use words to explain their thinking and problem-solving process beyond the visual representation. Additional examples of feedback directed students to push their thinking to create mathematical word problems using area and perimeter, vary their closing sentences on their essays, use transition words in their writing, cite textual evidence for each claim, and to expand on their ideas.

- All students have an individualized academic portfolio in which their work is monitored and they self-reflect on their learning, and document a trajectory of mastery. Student portfolios evidence feedback they received from their teachers and peers that includes next steps to improve their performance. Students can articulate and apply an understanding of their next steps for improvement and use rubrics as a tool to guide them through task completion. For example, one student shared that the teacher provides the rubric with the assignment and he uses the rubric to look at the column rated three and four to ascertain what to include in his work and to get a good grade. Another student shared meaningful feedback they received from classmates that have helped them become a better writer. This student shared that they used to write three sentences in a paragraph, but a classmate explained that a paragraph should be four to five sentences and showed them how to combine sentences to make one strong paragraph.

- Across the vast majority of the classrooms, there is evidence that teachers are assessing students’ learning and making in-the-moment adjustments to instruction. For example, during a grade-six math lesson while working in a group, students completed problems and came to a consensus on the answer. However, the teacher observed a common mistake that the group made and redirected the students through modeling; students then reconvened as a group to solve the problem correctly. Students also used self-assessment cards to check for understanding which prompted teachers to conduct a mid-lesson reteach or work with an individual or group of students who demonstrated a similar need for support. In a class of seventh- and eighth-grade students, in which students receive special services, the teacher redirected students to cite textual evidence while conducting a character analysis of Catching Fire by Suzanne Collins based on her observation of student work.
Additional Finding

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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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Findings

School leaders have a system in place that uses observational data to facilitate PD for staff. Feedback to teachers captures strengths, challenges and next steps using the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*.

Impact

Feedback articulates clear expectations for next steps and supports teacher development. Informed decisions are made to align PD to the needs of the staff.

Supporting Evidence

- Observation reports include feedback that captures teachers' strengths and challenges, and are accompanied by clear next steps teachers should take to improve their practice. For example, in one report, a teachers' identified area of strength was assessing students and ensuring that students were aware of the assessment criteria. Feedback was also given to this teacher to focus on conducting individualized instruction and assessments during group activates to monitor the learning of all students. Another report highlighted a teacher's practice of using a variety of question prompts to challenge students cognitively. Feedback advised the teacher to develop a structure that will require students to engage in discussions with their peers by pairing students or designing discussion groups. Other examples of feedback to teachers suggested that teachers monitor the spatial setting of numbers and the use of visual strategies, incorporating the use of technology as a resource to support students with researching strategies and teaching the writing process, and to record students' progress while checking for understanding to ensure that student needs and progress is monitored over time.

- Teachers communicated that feedback is received timely in order to ensure quick implementation of suggestions and next steps. For example, one teacher shared that “I can speak for most of the teachers in saying that administration has an open-door policy and are always accessible and immediately after an observation I, along with my colleagues, meet with our evaluator to discuss what went well and what needs to be improved.” While feedback to teachers offer actionable next steps that teachers can use toward pedagogical improvement, this feedback is not yet aligned to teacher professional goals.

- School leaders effectively design and facilitate PD using observation data and teaching trends and needs. For example, observations are conducted in four cycles beginning with teachers who are new to the profession and untenured, or teachers who have demonstrated the need for additional support and supervision and, as a result of this practice, the school principal developed a cycle of professional development for new teachers. School leaders meet at the conclusion of each observation cycle to revise the schedule using observable data and trends to ensure that teachers’ instructional needs are matched to school leaders’ expertise, and identified effective teacher practices supporting informed decision-making. This practice has led to the PD cycle and teacher-created intervisitation focus on teachers’ effective practices for improving writing for second-grade teachers.
Additional Finding

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

All teachers are engaged in teams that consistently analyze student work in cycles of inquiry that identify targeted areas of student needs and actively address those needs. Distributed leadership structures are embedded.

Impact

Collaborations within grade teams and content inquiry teams have strengthened teacher instructional capacity and consistency of practices across classrooms resulting in schoolwide instructional coherence. Embedded leadership structures empower teacher decision-making that affects student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- The math inquiry team met to analyze student progress related to their case study. Teachers presented updates on their students’ progress, identified gaps in reading comprehension and strategies that have been implemented to support struggling students. Each teacher presented a student case and collectively identified instructional strategies and additional supports to be provided by the academic intervention team. Teachers also presented a math performance task and looked at student work to identify procedural and conceptual understanding and misconceptions with graphic line plots and using data from the line plots to calculate the mean. Identified common misconceptions and error patterns across the grade were discussed and teachers agreed on re-teach strategies and pictorial scaffolds. The ELA team’s inquiry is focusing on skills and strategies to support students with writing a response to literature that includes accurate supporting details and concluding sentences. Teachers discussed appropriate scaffolds like concept maps and exemplary student responses to support students. Teachers also conduct intervisitations across grades and content areas using a common lens of student engagement, formative assessment and instructional strategies, and share feedback with each other. These collaborations and intervisitations have resulted in instructional coherence and improvement in schoolwide pedagogical practices.

- Teachers serve as grade leaders and participants in the instructional cabinet and play an integral role in key instructional decisions that affect student learning. For example, teacher members of the instructional cabinet presented to school leaders an online platform that serves as additional support to assist with differentiated instruction, implementation of various scaffolds to support students who have a disability and ELLs, and sharing of resources. School leaders agreed to try the program. As a result of its success, this online platform is now used schoolwide by faculty. Teachers across the school agreed that the use of the online platform has increased schoolwide coherence in implementing appropriate scaffolds to support struggling students and increase communication and sharing of resources that aid instruction.

- Teacher leaders take on an active role in deciding on the school’s instructional focus and the implementation of cycles of PD. For example, the second-grade teacher and administrator attended PD on the writing process and collaborated to develop a series. The teacher leader then facilitated a six-week writing workshop for her peers. Teachers shared that the workshop has improved consistency of practices in teaching writing across the grades and they have shared the resources on the school’s online platform.