Quality Review Report

2018-2019

P.S. 105 The Blythebourne
Elementary 20K105
1031 59 Street
Brooklyn
NY 11219

Principal: Johanna Castronovo

Dates of Review:
February 6, 2019 - February 7, 2019

Lead Reviewer: Kimberly 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. 105 The Blythebourne serves students in grade K 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>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>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</strong></td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>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</strong></td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>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</strong></td>
<td>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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## School Culture

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

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

### Additional Finding

- 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...**

<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>
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</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

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

Findings

Weekly social-emotional lessons and restorative circles ensure that each student is known well by at least one adult. The school community aligns professional development, family outreach, and student learning experiences and supports related to creating a positive learning environment.

Impact

Social-emotional learning programs and supports promote and result in students adopting effective academic and personal behaviors.

Supporting Evidence

- Students across the school participate in Sanford Harmony lessons each week. One lesson focused on recognizing the connection between thoughts, feelings, and actions. Students started the lesson by asking a neighbor how they felt today and discussed with a partner what they do really well, how they learned that skill and what was difficult about it to learn. The teacher reminded the students to respect their classmate by listening to what their partner has to say. During the large student meeting, a student stated that Sanford Harmony lessons help us communicate and learn about each other and learn what harmony, peace, friendship, working together and teamwork affects our daily life. Students discussed their participation in Project Human Rights and student leadership as a way to learn about each other and how to work together. Students responded that through these experiences they are well known by at least one adult in the school.

- Students participate in a variety of clubs and activities during and after the school day. Robotics, performing arts, science, technology, engineering, arts, mathematics (STEAM) activities, and student leadership are offered. In robotics class, students were learning about the programming of their robot. Trained parent volunteers assisted the teachers and students during the lesson, which gave students a positive connection to their school. The school community uses a variety of learning experiences and involves parents in those experiences to promote the adoption of effective academic and personal behaviors.

- The staff participates in professional development directly related to social-emotional learning and behavior interventions. The school’s guidance counselors, social worker, and parent coordinator works with them to support both students and parents. The school communicates with families through school newsletters, emails, phone calls and the school’s online grading program. Parent workshops addressing the middle school process, how to support the academic and social-emotional progress of their child and adult English as a New Language classes are held during the year. The school provides a parent lending library where parents and students can borrow books in their primary language. Throughout the year, specific events celebrate the academic success of students and the cultural diversity of the school community. Parents shared that they often will volunteer in their child’s classroom on a regular basis. Both students and parents underscored that the school provides a positive learning environment where students are well known by at least one adult.
Area of Focus

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

Across classrooms, teachers use assessments, rubrics, and grading policies that align to the school’s curricula, and provide opportunities for students to self-assess via checklists and reflection. However, these practices do not yet occur in the vast majority of classrooms.

Impact

Teachers provide actionable feedback to students, and the assessment practices in most classrooms reflect adjustments to meet the learning needs of students. However, as of yet, not all students understand their next learning steps across subject areas and grades.

Supporting Evidence

- Four main categories are addressed in the schoolwide grading policy. Quizzes, mid-unit assessments, end of unit assessments, and classwork with identified percentages are used to assess a student’s performance. Student work samples evidence the use of rubrics to provide feedback in the form of glows and grows. An essay in English provided the following “Glow: You were able to write about the two animals. Grow: We need to work on separating your ideas into paragraphs.” Teacher feedback for a science task states, “Two stars: I love the way you wrote about each community. One wish: Next time I wish you can explain a little about what you wrote.” A scoring rubric in English Language Arts (ELA) lists pertinent categories including whether the student understands the purpose, if the topic is clearly introduced, contains an appropriate conclusion, uses relevant facts from multiple sources, and links ideas with transitional words and phrases. A review of student work and speaking with students reveals that while rubrics are used, and students revise tasks, there is limited teacher feedback regarding actionable next steps. Thus, as yet students are not able to use the feedback to improve their subsequent work.

- In a fifth-grade math class, students used a math checklist to assess their work. Some of the self-check statements included showed my work, explained my answers, or used lots of math vocabulary used. In response to teacher feedback on an English informational essay, the student wrote, “One thing I did well is I used interesting hooks for each paragraph. For example, I have onomatopoeia. I learned that re-reading would catch errors. I corrected capitalization errors when I reread. My challenge was to use different strategies to write.” Students report that while they have opportunities to reflect on their work and next steps, those opportunities occur more often in their ELA classes than in other subjects. Across most classrooms, students are provided opportunities to self-assess their progress and identify next steps.

- Teachers use Measures of Student Learning (MOSL), writing assessments and performance tasks throughout the year. Teacher analysis of the baseline math assessments administered at the start of the school year identified that fifth-grade students leave questions blank that target the concept of functions and representation of an algebraic function. In response, teachers developed an action plan to focus on students’ definition, evaluation, and description of functions and how they can represent functions in different ways. Evidence in teacher conferencing notes and assessment binders demonstrate the use of data in the grouping of students and planning multiple entry points for specific students. Scaffolds, such as the use of graphic organizers, and vocabulary supports, are provided to learners as needed. Teachers utilize exit tickets and checklists during classroom instruction to assess student learning.
Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and the instructional shifts. Across grades and subjects, practices such as the Orton-Gillingham reading method for challenged readers are implemented with an emphasis on rigorous habits and higher-order skills for all students.

Impact

Coherent curricula support college and career readiness for all students. A diversity of students has access to the curricula and tasks and is cognitively engaged.

Supporting Evidence

- A review of curricular documents revealed alignment to the Common Core, with the school using Fountas and Pinnell and the Orton-Gillingham approach in English Language Arts. In math, Investigations and Engage NY modules are in alignment with the Common Core. The school ensures curricula coherence with the New York City (NYC) Social Studies Scope and Sequence and the New York State (NYS) science standards. School leaders and grade-level teams monitor the pacing and implementation of each curriculum. Necessary revisions are completed by the teacher teams utilizing Universal Design for Learning (UDL). As a result of the alignment of curricular documents across grades and content areas college and career readiness is promoted for all students.

- Curricula documents evidence consistent alignment with the Common Core and the integration of the math and ELA instructional shifts. For example, the content and language objectives for a math lesson describe how students will be able to round decimals to the nearest one, tenth, and hundredth and explain their mathematical thinking as well as applying the concept of rounding decimals to real-world examples. There is evidence that the instructional shifts of deep understanding in math and text based answers in ELA are incorporated across grades and subjects.

- All lessons and units are refined for English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities. A science lesson describes a focus on word study and developing phonemic awareness while supporting student’s understanding of the content. There is a clear explanation of the task with techniques to support groups of students including illustrations, modeling of the finished product, and glossaries with illustrations. To support varying levels of ELLs student handouts translated in the student’s primary language along with graphic organizers are provided. A lesson plan for a fourth-grade math class describes the grouping of students based on their levels of mastery related to multiplying a fraction by a whole number. Students needing extra support were to solve not only their assigned problem, but also tried an additional strategy of either the number line or drawing. An additional extension from EngageNY was planned for those students who complete their work early and demonstrate understanding. Students demonstrating mastery will create their own problem requiring multiplication and use visual fraction models, drawings, and number lines to arrive at a solution. Lesson and unit plans demonstrate that curricular and academic tasks emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills for ELLs and students with disabilities.
### Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices align to curricula and reflect the school’s belief that students learn best through customized, inclusive and motivating instruction. Teacher strategies consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula.

### Impact

Alignment to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and instructional focus allow students to provide evidence of their learning, engage in appropriately challenging tasks and produce meaningful work products.

### Supporting Evidence

- In a first-grade reading class, students sat in their literacy groups asking themselves what they had read about using sentence frames. In this classroom, there were three instructional outcomes written on the easel, “Focus: I can make sure I understand what I read before reading on by asking and answering, “What did I just read about?” Language Focus: I can orally tell what I just read about in a complete sentence using: I just read about____. Social Focus: I can use a quiet voice during literacy centers.” The teacher modeled for students how to read and stop to assess if they understood what they had read before having the students practice on their own. As students worked on independent practice, the teacher walked around the room and conferred with students to assess their progress. Across classrooms, teacher modeling, independent practice, and small group instruction provide opportunities for individual practice and students demonstrate their thinking and learning.

- In a third-grade social studies class, students discussed the definition of trade and utilized a graphic organizer to organize their findings regarding goods, services and how people used trade before the development of money. Looking specifically at how trade worked in Nigeria, students worked in three different groups with each group reflecting on a different text passage and using the graphic organizer to write a brief summary about what they read. The groups then presented what they learned to the rest of the class. Across grades and subjects, teachers provide students similar opportunities ensuring that all learners engage in appropriately challenging tasks and demonstrate higher-order thinking.

- In a fifth-grade math class, students were sitting on the floor as they worked in pairs and practiced rounding decimals to the nearest tenth, hundredth, and thousandth. The teacher circulated and checked on the progress of the students. After a turn and talk, the teacher reviewed the concept of rounding decimals asking students to explain detailed understandings addressing whether a number is larger than another and how a number line is helpful. Students then transitioned to their math workshop groups with one of the groups meeting with the teacher for additional support where they continued working on rounding decimals and writing decimals in expanded form. In a second-grade writing class, the teacher first modeled how writers use facts and reasons to support their opinion. Using a graphic organizer, the teacher modeled how to first generate facts and then circling the important facts in red. Next, students worked with partners to practice using the graphic organizer to generate more facts and to identify the important ones they would include in their writing. Across classrooms, teachers used writing, organizational tools and strategic grouping to support student thinking and the production of meaningful work products.
**Quality Indicator:** 3.4 High Expectations  
**Rating:** Well Developed

**Findings**
School leaders consistently communicate high expectations and provide training to the entire staff with a focus on literacy, the school's instructional focus. School leaders and staff effectively communicate expectations for a path to college and career readiness to families through meetings, workshops and newsletters.

**Impact**
Communication and professional development around high expectations results in a culture of mutual accountability. Partnerships with families support students in their progress toward college and career readiness.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Frequent classroom observations provide feedback utilizing the Danielson Framework for Teaching as the standard for professionalism and quality instruction. Observation reports include specific language from the rubric, evidence from the classroom observation that supports the rating, and actionable next steps ensuring that teachers clearly understand expectations. Those expectations are also communicated and supported through staff memos and professional development throughout the year emphasized the school’s instructional focus, use of interim assessment data to inform instruction, and goal setting. School leaders outlined the school’s instructional focus and what instructional practice would be implemented for the focus to be realized. Teachers are asked to check frequently for understanding and adjust lessons based on these checks, which directly aligns to the Danielson Framework for Teaching rubric for designing coherent instruction and using assessment. As a result of feedback and professional learning, teachers are supported in meeting the school’s expectations.

- School leaders consistently communicate the school’s goal promoting the use of self-monitoring strategies to improve comprehension across all content areas. Teachers are expected to use student assessment data in the planning of small group instruction and differentiation. To ensure ELLs are exposed to a print rich environment, it is expected that objects in the classroom be labeled, a cultural center is present that celebrates the students’ cultures, books are in a variety of languages, and high-frequency words and sentence frames are posted. Through clear and frequent communication, staff understands the high expectations of school leaders.

- School staff work with students and ensure they are on track for the next grade level and middle school. Parents spoke of the partnership they had with the school and specifically referenced the parent meetings and workshops the school provides throughout the year. Parents are informed about the middle school application process through one-on-one meetings and workshops. School leaders attend the Parent-Teacher Association and School Leadership Team meetings and inform parents of the progress the school is making toward the school’s goals. Parents spoke positively about the availability of the principal and the monthly calendars sent home. The school also communicates expectations through emails, phone calls, text messages, an online-grading system, parent-teacher conferences, and during open school week. Information is sent home to families in English, Spanish, and Chinese. Thus, through a variety of strategic methods the school is successfully partnering with families to support students in meeting all expectations.
Findings
The vast majority of teachers are engaged in inquiry-based, structured professional collaboration. Across the school, grade level, content, and house teams meet on a consistent basis to analyze assessment data, student work products, and to share teaching strategies.

Impact
Teacher engagement in inquiry-based, structured professional collaborations has strengthened their instructional capacity and promoted implementation of the instructional shifts. Systematic analysis of student data and work products has resulted in the achievement of goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- The vast majority of teachers are engaged in inquiry-based professional collaborations by grade level. At the beginning of the year, teacher teams analyzed state math and ELA data and identified the areas where students needed additional support. In ELA, identifying main idea, analyzing events, and explaining text structures became a focus. In math, applying multiplication and division properties, interpret expressions, and identifying patterns surfaced as areas that needed to be targeted. In the minutes from a third-grade meeting, teachers described their observations regarding how students have difficulty understanding the language of the questions and how they need to incorporate more content vocabulary in class discussions. Academic vocabulary knowing the difference between terms such as explain, determine, analyze, and examine were found to be in need of extra attention. During the kindergarten meeting, teachers identified the need to incorporate higher-level questions as part of their review of the New York State English as a Second Language (NYSESLAT) test questions and to incorporate sentence stems in their math centers. As a result of the vast majority of teachers meeting in inquiry-based professional collaborations and improving instruction, there is evidence of instructional coherence and increased student achievement for all learners.

- The school’s instructional leadership team was observed analyzing student work from a recent fourth- and fifth-grade reading task for students. The task involved students responding to text dependent questions. The team utilized a protocol that included the reviewing of the group’s norms, presentations from individuals of their work in progress and what supports they are asking from the group. Then, they determined what instructional next steps the team would incorporate across the different content areas. Two teachers shared copies of student work and two different close reading bookmarks that included symbols students could use to mark key details, connections they made to the text, or questions they had about the text or words they didn’t understand. The team determined that while students comprehend the text and can provide details, they still have a challenge transferring their thinking to their writing and developing their own inferences or conclusions. The team determined that some next steps include the annotation of writing prompts, and helping them in the development of their own thinking and designing an additional scaffold. The team also decided to share annotation across grade bands.

- Teachers spoke of how meeting by grade-level teams has changed the way they look at data. In a review of teacher team minutes and agendas, there is evidence that teams using a variety of data including running records, performance tasks, and student work along with careful data analysis has resulted in improvement in teacher practice and mastery of goals for groups of students.