Quality Review Report

2018-2019

P.S. 107 John W. Kimball
Elementary 15K107
1301 8 Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11215

Principal: Eve Litwack

Dates of Review:
January 30, 2019 - January 31, 2019

Lead Reviewer: Glenda Esperance
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. 107 John W. Kimball 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

### Instructional Core

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>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>
</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>Area of Focus</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>Well Developed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Findings

The school community’s approach to culture building, discipline, and social emotional support is grounded in the belief that it is the responsibility of staff member to teach tolerance and peaceful solutions to conflict. Structures are in place to support the coordination of social emotional learning and youth development for academic success

Impact

Student academic and personal behaviors that are being nurtured in a safe and respectful environment are evidenced via student voice through initiatives such as No Place for Hate, grade specific student councils, daily morning meetings, huddles, and peer conflict resolution techniques.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders have created grade specific councils to ensure that student voice is incorporated into the school culture. Selected grade five students participate on the Student Equity Council, a team charged with the task of reviewing school tone and identifying bullying behavior. The team meets on a consistent basis and creates action plans to address identified concerns. At one meeting students created a list of topics students may be bullied about and discussed ways to solve the problems. Grade four students engage in the student capital spending project council. This group of students was given an allocation of school funds and they must work collaboratively to decide how that funding will be used to improve the school community. Students are responsible for generating a list of ideas, creating a proposal narrative, and delivering class presentations. In the past, students have used this funding stream to purchase additional instruments for the music department and to purchase quail eggs that were incubated, hatched, and released by the science department. These councils are platforms that ensure student voices and ideas are incorporated into the school community.

- Across grade levels, the school faculty ensures that students are well known by at least one adult. Kindergarten to grade four students participate in morning meetings on a daily basis. During these sessions teachers and students greet each other, participate in a group activity, and share important information about the day. Grade five students participate in “Huddle” three times a week. During these sessions, students are provided with supports on utilizing a personal planner, strengthening organizational skills, and prioritizing projects and assignments. The groups also discuss specific issues selected from a list of student-generated topics created at the beginning of the school year. During an observation of a grade five huddle, students reviewed the school’s conflict resolution technique and were given the opportunity to make revisions to the tool. One student stated, “Some of these steps are bit immature and we are making changes so that the language sounds more like the way we speak.”

- To promote inclusion and tolerance across the school community, school leaders have implemented the No Place for Hate program to embrace and uphold standards of behavior and high expectations of respect for all. The school has an established partnership with a local community-based organization and students participate in schoolwide initiatives that support this year’s theme, “Choose Kind.” In November, students decorated delivery bags used to provide food for those in need, and in January students created greeting cards that offered well wishes to the elderly. Additionally, all students are provided with strategies to help resolve and/or avoid conflict. Kindergarten through grade five students are trained on Peace Path, a peer conflict resolution technique. Students indicate that the presence of Peace Path has introduced them to new ways of addressing conflicts. These initiatives contribute to the positive climate felt within the school building amongst all its constituents.
Area of Focus

<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

Distributive leadership structures are in place and teacher teams consistently analyze grade-level assessment data and student work.

Impact

Teacher teams’ analysis of student work typically results in improved teacher practice and there are opportunities for teachers to have a voice in key decisions. However, the distributive leadership structures in place are not deeply rooted in the school’s daily operations and teachers’ influence on policies and programs affecting student achievement is limited.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers meet with school leaders in September to set professional goals which in turn influence the school leaders’ decisions on professional learning and inform teacher collaboration structures. The Professional Development Committee assisted in the development of Monday professional development aligned to schoolwide social-emotional learning initiatives and teacher needs. Grade specific Response to Intervention (RTI) team meetings, which include school leaders, occur on a monthly basis. The group reviews high-risk priority students to discuss interventions for these students. Consequently, these teams allow for some teacher voice in making key decisions in the school. However, their participation is limited in scope.

- School leaders facilitate monthly grade team meetings to review pacing and curriculum adjustments needed based on student performance in each unit. Student work is also reviewed at these sessions to ensure its alignment to the school’s instructional expectations and to discuss next steps. School leaders will also occasionally invite their hired math consultant to participate in the meetings to address staff concerns. Although, grade level meetings are guided by a protocol that includes a review student work across subjects to determine strengths and identify next steps, these meetings are held at the request of school leaders, thus limiting the frequency of their occurrence. Additionally, grade teams have limited opportunities to systematically analyze student work and data without the presence of a school leader.

- The grade four teacher team was observed reviewing student work products. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss current jots from the reading interpretation unit and the Slower than Rest fiction end-unit assessment. This information would be used to determine growth and next steps for independent practice and small group work. Teachers looked at the work of one struggling student per class. One of the teacher team members stated, “We chose to focus on this topic because we noticed that during independent practice and homework kids weren’t bringing their best work and we wanted to stop and have a check-in.” Teachers created a list of strategies to implement in order to move the work which included, providing a mentor jot for students to refer to during independent practice, using a video to support the lesson, including an additional lesson on identifying theme, and reducing the number of students working in small group instruction based on student performance. During the meeting the teachers presented data which revealed students starting to show progress and improve their jot work. These meetings aim to ensure the alignment of expectations across classrooms and contribute to progress towards goals for groups of students.
Findings
School leaders and faculty integrate instructional shifts into Common Core aligned curricula and use Universal Design for Learning (UDL) guidelines to ensure that plans include academic tasks that are accessible to a variety of learners.

Impact
Across grade levels a diverse group of learners are cognitively engaged in standard-based curricula.

Supporting Evidence

- Analysis of curricular reveals the inclusion of several instructional shifts across content areas. Across grade levels, literacy units include a balance of informational and literary texts and teachers have increased student opportunities for independent reading. Additionally, tasks are designed to encourage students to build knowledge about the world through text and emphasize the use of citing evidence from sources to make an argument. In a third-grade English Language Arts, (ELA), unit plan, students had to select biographies and autobiographies from the classroom library to obtain information for their wax museum assignment that required them to conduct research to create a speech to introduce their exhibit. Additionally, the math curriculum was revamped this school year and all units now include activities designed to promote fluency and basic skill acquisition. Students are now assigned multi-step problems that support a deeper understanding of math concepts and require them to demonstrate their thinking. In a fifth-grade math lesson plan, the students were assigned an application problem that required them to find fraction sets and show their thinking with model representations.

- Curricular documents include evidence of adjustments made based on student data. Math lesson plans include data tracking sheets that guide the adjustments being made for English Language Learners, (ELLs), and students with disabilities. Across most classrooms, teacher lesson plans include a list of students being monitored and targeted for differentiation. A first grade lesson plan includes two types of math fluency worksheets; one for students performing on or above grade level and another with adjustments to address the needs of students who require additional support. Literacy unit plans are adjusted using data derived from on-going benchmarks assessments. For example, a grade-five writing curriculum map was revised to include an increased emphasize on creating the body paragraphs. This adjustment was made based on data derived from the results of the previous unit’s end-performance task.

- Across content areas school faculty applies the UDL guidelines to optimize teaching and learning for diverse learners. Most unit plans are designed to provide multiple means of representation, engagement, actions, and expression. For example, a grade four literacy unit incorporated adjustments such as role playing, checklists, sentence starters, graphic organizers, and visible timers. A grade three math curriculum included the use of manipulatives, charts, video supplements, and picture or color cues. Additionally, the established lesson plan templates include a section entitled, differentiation/students to monitor and support. This section includes the names of students that will be targeted during the lesson as well as the strategies that will be used to ensure accessibility to the curriculum. These features support cognitive engagement for both ELLs and students with disabilities.
## Additional Finding

### Quality Indicator:

| 1.2 Pedagogy | Rating: Proficient |

### Findings

Across classrooms, teacher pedagogy reflects a set of beliefs that students learn best when there are opportunities for student discussion and small group instruction. Teaching strategies consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricular.

### Impact

Teacher pedagogy that is aligned to a set of schoolwide beliefs and lessons are designed to meet the learning needs of a variety of learners.

### Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms teachers incorporate small group instruction that provides support for students, including students with disabilities. For example, in a grade five Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) math class students were divided into groups to complete the day learning objective of multiplying whole numbers by a fraction using tape diagrams. Each group had a specific focus. There was a group of students on laptops working on a web-based program that reinforces math concepts. Another group was partnered with the special education teacher and she reviewed steps for finding fractions with the students. The general education teacher conducted check-ins and monitored the progress of the remaining three groups. He supported the students based on their needs and charted their progress. In a grade two ICT literacy class, the teachers divided the room into stations to address the variety of learners in the room. The students were revising their poems and incorporating figurative language into their pieces. One teacher worked with the a set of students on using personification while the other teacher conducted a lesson on metaphors.

- In a grade two literacy class students were practicing a variety of reading comprehension strategies based on individual need. Students read with partners or independently and there were four students assigned to work with the teacher on the rug. Students were reading leveled texts based on the data from their most recent running records assessment. Their books had post-its with guiding questions created by the teacher. There was a new English Language Learner in the class and she was using a laptop to access an online reading software program. The teacher walked around the classroom to ensure students were on task and took notes on student performance.

- Across content areas students were provided with opportunities to participate in student discussion. In a grade five literacy class the teacher conducted a read aloud of the text, *See You at Harry’s*. The teacher posed questions to the students and asked them to turn and talk about specific events in the book throughout the reading. In a grade four science class, students conducted a discovery lab on magnets Students held discussions with lab group members about the various uses of magnets and shared questions on their observations with each other. In a grade five literacy class, students read multiple articles on the correlation between brain injuries, concussion, and football and they discussed their views on the topic with their peers and cited evidence from the text to support their opinions.
### Findings

School leaders and faculty use common assessments to determine student progress towards grade-level goals. Across classrooms teachers use formative assessments to make adjustments to lessons and to plan next steps for individual and groups of students.

### Impact

Classroom instruction and student intervention programs are adjusted to meet the learning needs of students.

### Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use data derived from summative and formative assessments to create an individualized Response to Intervention (RtI) plan for selected students. This personalized document, developed by school leaders and staff, provides its readers with a summary of a specific student's strengths and areas of primary concerns. It also includes a tracker that monitors the strategies being used to address the student's academic needs in school and at home. Student progress towards grade-level milestones is reviewed on an ongoing basis during the RtI team’s monthly meetings. Teachers also use this document to determine the types of interventions and supports incorporated into their lesson plans. This system advances the faculty’s efforts in addressing the learning gaps of students who struggle with specific aspects of the curricular.

- In English Language Arts (ELA), Fountas and Pinnell assessments are administered on an ongoing basis. This data is used in classrooms to determine reading groups and identify students in need of academic support. School leaders have also used this information to create a reading intervention tracker that charts progress being made by all students with a focus on students with disabilities and English Language Learners (ELLs). Additionally, across grade levels, there is evidence of teachers using formative assessments to track student fluency in math. Students participate in timed math sprints, which is a skill specific activity designed to develop automaticity. Student performance is logged by topic and teachers make adjustments to instruction accordingly. For example, a grade two teacher’s math lesson plan and conference notes revealed that several students were selected to continue working on combos of 10 in small group instruction, based on their recent performance on a math sprint activity.

- Across most classrooms teachers checked in with groups of students and adjusted the lesson accordingly. In a grade five math class, a small group of students were pulled to confer with the teacher to clarify misconceptions demonstrated in their exit slip responses. The teacher reviewed the topic with students before allowing them to move on to the new lesson designed for the day. In a grade three class, students were working on an “all about” book. During a brief check-in the teacher noticed six students struggling with creating the bibliography section of the book. The teacher pulled the students over to her desk and showed students how to create a bibliography and provided two students with mentor pieces to use as references.
Additional Finding

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

Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations and provide trainings to staff. School staff successfully partners with families to support their children’s progress utilizing a variety of communication modalities to foster on-going parent engagement.

Impact

School leaders and staff establish a culture of mutual accountability set forth by clear expectations and effective parent outreach which supports student achievement.

Supporting Evidence

- In addition to a School Policy and Procedures handbook, school leaders distribute a weekly newsletter to ensure that high expectations are clear to staff. This document provides staff with on-going updates pertaining to upcoming schoolwide events, professional development opportunities and compliance concerns. The newsletter also highlights best practices and provides pedagogical resources to the school community. In one edition of the newsletter, a staff member was celebrated for her efforts in creating a tracking system for student reading levels in Google Docs. In another addition, teachers were provided with materials that support the school’s Response to Intervention (RtI) program.

- At the beginning of the year, the school faculty hosts a curriculum night to review a parent handbook and explain academic and social expectations to parents. During the school year, school leaders hold an annual “Principally Speaking” meeting with each grade level to outline major curricular areas and concepts being taught to students. Families also participate in workshops to help them prepare their children for the next grade level. For example, the school hosted a Middle School Forum that allowed former PS 107 fifth grade students to participate in a panel discussion about their current experiences in middle school. School staff also hosts an annual end-of-year workshop that provides parents with insight on the expectations for the upcoming school year with the goal of increasing students’ preparedness for their new grade level. This partnership between parents and school staff has contributed to increased student achievement.

- School leaders use a variety of modalities to communicate and support the school community in meeting the set expectations of the school building. The communication platform Konstella is utilized by all parents and teachers to ensure the entire school community is actively informed about schoolwide programs. It also provides its users with an outlet to share their concerns. For example, the school hosted an RtI workshop at the request of parents. A parent stated, “I wanted to know more about RtI and I asked the school for support on this topic.” In addition to the school’s general website, school leaders worked with a consultant to launch a separate website to support the implementation of the new math curriculum. The site has been accessed by both teachers and parents and it has helped them become more familiar with the new curriculum. It also supplies unlimited online access to unit modules, tips, and strategies that support their children’s academic achievement in math.