Quality Review Report

2018-2019

P.S. 177 The Marlboro
Elementary 21K177
346 Avenue P
Brooklyn
NY 11204

Principal: Ann Marie Lettieri Baker

Dates of Review:
May 22, 2019 - May 23, 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. 177 The Marlboro 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

### Instructional Core

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<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Ensure engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula in all subjects, accessible for a variety of learners and aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</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>Proficient</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.2 Align assessments to curricula, use on-going assessment and grading practices, and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom levels</td>
<td>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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## School Culture

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<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</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>
<td>Well Developed</td>
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## Systems for Improvement

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<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<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>
<td>Well Developed</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>
<td>Proficient</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>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Well Developed</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>
<td>Proficient</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>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

| Quality Indicator: | 4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision | Rating: Well Developed |

Findings
School leaders and teacher peers provide ongoing support to teachers. Feedback provided in observation reports and coaching logs is aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching and is used to monitor teacher progress towards professional goals.

Impact
The observation process is a platform that elevates schoolwide instructional practices promotes professional growth and self-reflection.

Supporting Evidence

- During cabinet meetings, school leaders review teacher observation data, revisit teacher goals, and create action plans, when applicable. School administrators follow an established observation protocol and adhere to an observation schedule that is designed to ensure strategic and frequent classroom visits. School leaders conduct both announced and unannounced observations, and they prioritize classroom visits based on teachers’ demonstrated needs. There is a post-observation conference with teachers after every visit. Feedback provided to teachers is grounded in Danielson’s Framework for Teaching and is aligned to teachers’ professional goals. Teachers shared that they develop goals at the beginning of the year and then use feedback from administrators to inform their next steps toward improving their pedagogical practices. Coaching logs highlight areas of teacher-peer supports that are provided to teachers, such as in preparing lesson plans, designing scaffolds and supports, implementing effective classroom management structures, planning for learning center activities, and conducting meaningful student conferences. These structures and supports have contributed to an increased number of teachers demonstrating improved classroom practices.

- In September, teachers worked collaboratively with school leaders to create professional goals for the year. Once goals have been established, teachers participate in schoolwide and individualized professional learning (PL) sessions to strengthen their pedagogical practices. School leaders create a PL action plan aligned to the Danielson’s Framework for Teaching for new teachers and chart the actions being made towards meeting their respective goals. For example, a cluster teacher’s plan included intervisitations to another school, PL from a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) partner, and observation feedback. These interactions and activities supported this teacher in reaching a goal of planning and executing engaging STEM opportunities for a wide range of learners. Evidence of success towards meeting a professional goal is measured using student work products. Administrators also conduct ongoing meetings with teachers to revisit their goals and, if appropriate, create a new goal. This progress monitoring system has helped improve teacher practices and increase student performance.

- Observation reports across all content area teachers contain feedback as to how teachers can improve lesson planning, increase student engagement and create opportunities for authentic discussions. The vast majority of reports include feedback in the form of commendations, recommendations, and specific suggestions teachers can take to improve instruction. For example, a school leader praised a fourth-grade math teacher’s effective planning and execution of the observed lesson. A recommendation to the teacher included, “In order for you to elevate your practice to highly effective in using questioning and discussion techniques, consider ways to incorporate mathematical discussions to help build understanding of concepts. Your questions need to be framed in a manner that challenges students to extend their thinking and make connections to other learning.” In a follow-up report, feedback included praise for the teacher’s implementation of the recommended strategy.
Area of Focus

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

The school uses common assessments to determine student progress toward grade-level goals. Across classrooms, teachers consistently use data from tracking charts and formative assessments to adjust curricula and instruction and address the needs of students, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities.

Impact

Common assessment data are used to update class profiles that monitor student progress towards goals. While teachers are making effective adjustments to classroom instruction based on checks for understanding to address the needs of learners, including higher achievers, these practices were not evident in the vast majority of classrooms.

Supporting Evidence

- All teachers are trained on the Fountas and Pinnell assessments that are administered on an ongoing basis. English Language Arts (ELA) writing units are designed to include both pre- and post-assessments to track student performance across a variety of genres. In math, kindergarten to grade five teachers monitor each student’s performance on unit assessments. A spreadsheet shows improved student achievement on Common Core Learning Standards-aligned curricula. Consequently, school leaders have organized student data to produce class profiles with individual student benchmark results outlined. Students who do not show progress are programmed for cycles of Academic Intervention Services (AIS), and a plan is put in place for further diagnostics and interventions, as needed. School leaders also monitor the impact of AIS cycles on each student and track performance pre- and post-assessments specific to the area of need. As a result of this work, struggling students are making progress towards grade and subject area goals. However, there was no evidence that all students, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities, have demonstrated increased mastery.

- Teachers use assessment data to plan and monitor student performance and implement differentiated activities in literacy and mathematics. There is also evidence of teachers revising lessons, reteaching topics, and extending units, when necessary. Teachers reflect on completed units of study, using data from benchmark and formative assessments to inform the adjustments to units. In June, teachers meet to refine the curriculum in preparation for the upcoming school year, ensuring horizontal alignment from one grade level to the next and making adjustments to support the needs of learners. For example, math unit plans and pacing calendars for grades one through five include a list of accommodations for struggling students, such as the use of manipulatives, visual aids, and technology. Moreover, additional math instructional periods were added by school leaders, based on identified student need.

- Teachers make effective in-the-moment adjustments based on data to meet the learning needs of a range of students, including ELLs and students with disabilities. For example, in a fifth-grade math class, students were working on multi-step problems. Students were assigned tiered worksheets based on their abilities, as well as scaffolds and manipulatives for additional support. During the lesson, the teacher checked in with students, tracking their specific responses to the task. However, these practices were not observed in the vast majority of classes. Additionally, there were no extension opportunities offered to high-preforming students who completed the activity early and demonstrated mastery. Instead, these students sat quietly waiting for the teacher.
### Additional Finding

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

School leaders and faculty integrate instructional shifts into Common Core-aligned curricula, such as using text-based evidence to support assertions and the use of application in math. Academic tasks are planned and refined using student data.

#### Impact

Across grade levels, a diverse group of learners are cognitively engaged in standard-based curricula. Instructional materials are adjusted for students with varying needs; however, this practice does not extend to the planning for the highest-achieving students.

#### Supporting Evidence

- Analysis of curricula reveals the inclusion of multiple instructional shifts across content areas. Kindergarten through grade-five literacy units include a balance of informational and literary texts. Additionally, tasks are designed to encourage students to engage in rich, evidence-based conversations about a text. In a fifth-grade social studies unit plan, students were required to read and annotate a text entitled "Life at a Mining Camp during the California Gold Rush." After the reading, student partners discussed the author’s purpose for writing the piece and cited evidence from the text to support their claims. Math curricula include opportunities for students to apply math concepts to real-world situations. Across kindergarten to fifth-grade unit plans, students are assigned multi-step problems that support a deeper understanding of math concepts and require them to demonstrate their thinking. In a second-grade math lesson plan, students were assigned a multi-step problem that required them to compare fractions and determine which fraction was larger, showing all their mathematical thinking. In a kindergarten math lesson plan, students were required to sort and organize nine buttons into two or three categories and then explain why they selected the method they used to sort them items.

- Curricular documents include evidence of revisions made based on student data. Math lesson plans include data that guide the refinements being made for ELLs and students with disabilities. Across most classrooms, teacher lesson plans include a list of students being monitored and targeted for differentiation. A third-grade lesson plan included three types of math multi-step word problem: one for students performing on grade level, one for students above grade level, and a third with adjustments to address the needs of students who required additional support. Another grade three plan included a glossary of math terms that contained visual representations of the terms to support ELLs. Literacy unit plans are adjusted using data derived from ongoing benchmarks assessments. For example, a grade-five reading unit plan was extended to accommodate students who had to reread a text in order to better understand the lesson and to increase their volume of conversation and thinking time. This adjustment was made based on data derived from the results of the ongoing formative assessments of the task. However, a majority of lesson plans do not contain evidence planning so that higher-achieving students' needs are met.

- Across content areas, school faculty include accommodations in their unit and lesson plans to help optimize teaching and learning for diverse learners. Most unit plans are designed to provide multiple means of engagement for students. For example, a grade-four literacy unit incorporated adjustments such as checklists, sentence starters, reference sheets, and graphic organizers. The grade-three math curriculum included the use of manipulatives, word banks, sentence starters, anchor charts, and visual aids. Additionally, the established lesson plans include a section specifically to address the needs of students with disabilities and ELLs. This section lists the strategies that will be used to ensure accessibility to the curriculum and, in some instances, the names of students that will be targeted during the lesson as well. For example, a literacy plan included front-loading vocabulary, tiered reading response stems, and an infographic highlighting ways to push student thinking. These features support cognitive engagement for both ELLs and students with disabilities.
Findings
Across classrooms, teaching strategies such as scaffolds and groupings consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula so that all learners can participate in high-level academic tasks.

Impact
Teachers’ use of multiple entry points ensure accessibility to tasks for a variety of learners, including ELLs and students with disabilities. Students engage in high levels of thinking, leading to the development of meaningful work products across classrooms.

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, student groupings are intentional for ELLs and students with disabilities, with a variety of supports incorporated into lessons. In a grade-three ELA classroom, the teacher conducted a read aloud of Junie B. Jones is (almost) a Flower Girl. Students were provided with two types of graphic organizers to capture their stop-and-jot notes as well as sample sentence starters. Furthermore, the teacher gave ELLs a word bank and visual aides to help them access pertinent vocabulary. In a kindergarten math class, students were required to sort and organize nine buttons into categories and then explain why they selected the method used to sort the items. The teacher created two versions of the activity, one including scaffolding. Additionally, the teacher administered a formative assessment to identify the anticipated needs of each student in the class and used this data to create small group and partner assignments. Students were also provided with math strategy charts and problem-solving checklists. These teaching strategies ensured that a variety of learners were engaged in appropriately challenging tasks.

- In a grade-three Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) math classroom, students were correcting errors they made on their multi-step word problems, using feedback from their partners for guidance. The teacher unpacked the rubric and reviewed the expectations of the peer-assessment feedback tool. Three versions of the tool were created to ensure accessibility to the wide range of learners, including one to address the needs specific to ELLs. Additionally, scaffolded supports included hints and sentence starters. In a grade-five science class, students worked in pairs to program robots to move along a color-coded path. The teacher incorporated scaffolds and supports to ensure the accessibility of the task to all learners. For example, students performing below grade level received a reference sheet that displayed the moves associated with each color and its respective definition. Students performing on or above grade level had the opportunity to customize a map for their robots. Although teaching in this class showed evidence of supports so that all students could engage in challenging tasks, this practice was not observed in the vast majority of classrooms.

- Across classrooms, teachers incorporate small group instruction that offers multiple entry points to engage all students, including students with disabilities. In a grade three ICT math class, students completed a task that required them to plot points on a grid to determine the geometric shapes that can be made by connecting the points. While one teacher conducted check-ins and monitored student progress, the other teacher worked with a small group reviewing steps for plotting points on a grid. Students were also given manipulatives and visual aids based on need. In a grade-five ICT literacy class, students were reading The Thief of Always and identifying lessons in the text that might apply to their own lives. The teachers divided the room into stations to address the variety of learners in the room. The general education teacher conducted a read aloud, posed questions, and facilitated discussions with her designated group while the special education teacher revisited sections of the text to help students gain a deeper understanding of the book. The special education teacher also gave her students sentence starters, a common themes reference sheet, and t-charts to help them differentiate between universal themes and lessons that are important to their lives.
Additional Finding

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations and provide training to staff related to these expectations. School staff successfully partner with families to support their children’s progress, utilizing a variety of communication modalities, including online and more traditional means, to foster ongoing parent engagement.

Impact

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

Supporting Evidence

- The Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP) goals and instructional focus are presented to all staff members in September. The school’s instructional focus is supported through cycles of PL planned and executed by curriculum staff developers and the school’s coaches. In addition to a school policy and procedures handbook, school leaders distribute a weekly newsletter to ensure that high expectations are clear to staff. The newsletter celebrates teacher milestones and offers pedagogical resources to the school community. This document also provides staff with on-going updates about schoolwide events, PL opportunities, and compliance concerns. In one edition of the newsletter, school leaders reminded staff about the expectations and deadlines regarding running records submissions. Another edition included expectations for teachers regarding a scheduled intervisitation that would be showcasing the school’s best practices to a neighboring school in the district.

- At the beginning of the year, the faculty hosts a kick-off event for parents to review the parent handbook and explain academic and social expectations. Teachers meet with parents every Tuesday to discuss students’ academic progress and social-emotional concerns as well as to develop plans for shared support and improvement. Throughout the school year, parents are given updates on their children’s progress through an online platform utilized by all staff members. Additionally, ELLs are provided with printed progress reports that evaluate the gains being made in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. This document also provides parents with a list of recommendations and resources that support academic achievement. Moreover, teachers send a monthly newsletter to parents with information about the current units of study, standards being addressed, and initiatives taking place across grade levels.

- Parent workshops are tailored to meet the needs of the school community. The school sends out a survey to parents, and the results are used to inform and plan a menu of parent workshops that are both academically-focused and interest-based. The school has hosted a wide range of workshops dealing with literacy, math, internet safety, bullying, effective homework habits, and the middle school application process. School leaders also send parents a monthly memo entitled “From the Desk of Ms. Lettieri” to help support student needs at home. The topics discussed in this document mirror those of the in-school workshops. For example, in one edition, readers were provided with a list of detailed strategies to support literacy at home. The partnership between parents and school staff has effectively communicated to parents the expectations connected to a path towards college and career readiness for their children and contributed to increased student achievement. One parent stated, “My daughter was struggling in math and we worked to figure to help her…The teacher gave me work to do at home with my daughter and then she got better.”
Additional Finding

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

The majority of teachers are engaged in inquiry-based professional collaborations. Teachers also consistently analyze assessment data and student work for groups of students.

Impact

The work of teacher teams is strengthening teachers’ instructional practices; however, it has not resulted in increased achievement for all students. Although groups of students are demonstrating progress towards department-specific goals, such as writing for ELLs, evidence did not show that groups of students have mastered goals as a result of the work of teacher teams.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use multiple common planning periods to meet in grade-level teams to revise their units of study. The teachers assess learning outcomes, using a variety of strategies to plan for small-group instruction and scaffolds necessary to provide access for ELLs, students with disabilities, and struggling students. For example, during one meeting the grade-three team reviewed reading-level data to form guided reading groups. In another meeting, the team scored math benchmark exemplars and used the results to create small groups for reteaching. All teams are also supported by the math and literacy coaches, who work to ensure that the decisions made promote the achievement of the schoolwide instructional foci. The effectiveness of teacher teams is monitored by school leaders and measured using an analysis of student performance outcomes as measured by pre-, post-, and benchmark assessments. This work has resulted in teachers’ strengthening their pedagogical practices, it has not resulted in schoolwide instructional-strategy coherence.

- In addition to grade-level teacher teams, there are vertical teams comprised of administrators and teachers from various grade levels. This structure serves as a stage for teacher voice in key decisions in schoolwide initiatives. For example, the continuous learning group engages in inquiry work to test a variety of strategies to engage ELLs. This vertical inquiry team meets bi-monthly and is comprised of the school's administrators, instructional coaches, classroom teachers, and English as a New Language (ENL) service providers. The team reviews student work, analyzes data, and makes adjustments to curriculum and pedagogical practices throughout the school year. These efforts help ensure that school leaders are on track to meet the school’s goals for transitioning and expanding ELLs. As a result of the team’s work, the target group participants demonstrated an average increase of one performance level on the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test, (NYSESLAT) writing rubric. The team has also been celebrated for their work, and they serve as a model for other continuous learning groups across the district. School leaders voiced their intentions of sharing the group’s best practices with the entire staff, so that these structures could be emulated across all teacher teams.

- During an observation of the continuous learning group, teachers presented scaffolds they created based on specific next steps from a prior meeting. Teacher pairs shared samples of supports and their impact on learning. For example, the kindergarten partners shared how they used sentence starters in their literacy units, resulting in the target group learning to write independently. Fourth-grade partners discussed scaffolds selected for a unit of study on journalism, sharing samples of the checklist used and leveled mentor texts. Another teacher shared a copy of a handbook she created entitled My Text Features Book, which provided detailed descriptions of each feature by explaining its purpose and providing a visual example. This work has supported the integration of the literacy focus of engaging students in evidence-based conversations about text. At the end of the meeting, a teacher shared that her participation in this group has developed her pedagogy.