Quality Review Report

2018-2019

P.S. 299 Thomas Warren Field
Elementary 32K299
88 Woodbine Street
Brooklyn
NY 11221

Principal: Carleen Miller Bailey

Dates of Review:
February 26, 2019 - February 27, 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


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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Developing</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the instructional shifts and Danielson Framework for Teaching, aligned to the curricula, engaging, and meets the needs of all learners so that all students produce meaningful work products</td>
<td>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Developing</td>
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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>Proficient</td>
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### School Quality Ratings continued

#### School Culture

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

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<td>Additional Finding</td>
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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

#### Systems for Improvement

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

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1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the schools instructional goals and meet student learning needs, as evidenced by meaningful student work products

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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

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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

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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

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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

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<td>Additional Finding</td>
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Area of Celebration

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

School leaders consistently convey high expectations to staff through ongoing feedback and professional learning aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. School leaders and staff convey high expectations associated with college and career readiness to families.

Impact

Ongoing communication and support from school leaders have increased teachers' understanding of and accountability for school leaders' expectations regarding teaching and learning. Families are provided with ongoing information and feedback about student progress toward goals.

Supporting Evidence

- Frequent classroom observations by school leaders provide feedback to teachers, utilizing the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* as the standard for professionalism and quality instruction. Observation reports include specific language from the rubric and evidence from the classroom that supports the rating, along with actionable next steps so that teachers clearly understand expectations. The Advance observations also include evidence of the impact of the school's work in the various domains of the Danielson Framework during professional development on teacher practice. An example of actionable next steps states, “Groups should be flexible and adjusted based on the data collected through various observations throughout the lesson. Meet with students who need more support first. Be consistent with routines and rituals to provide stability for the other students to work independently.” Teachers report they are growing in practices such as more student-centered instruction based on their observations and feedback and are held accountable by school leaders for growth in their teacher practice.

- School leaders convey high expectations to staff through staff memos, emails, and professional development. A review of memos shows evidence of communication that outlines expectations around grading and attendance, lesson and unit planning, classroom and behavior management, classroom expectations, and the school goals that “Scholars feel safe and supported, learning is multisensory, instruction is relevant and challenges their thinking, scholars have multiple opportunities to engage in discussion, and feedback is responsive and advances.” Teachers participate in professional development in making thinking visible, data analysis, content specific training and positive behavior supports. Through training and professional learning, school leaders are building a culture of high expectations.

- Partnerships with families support students in their progress towards the next grade level and middle-school readiness. Parents reported that school leaders communicate with them regarding the school's goals, and there is parent involvement in the school's School Leadership Team and Parent Teacher Association. Parents received communication via letter, email, phone calls, a parent handbook, and monthly “Sip and Chats” with the principal. In addition, parents spoke of the workshops and meetings the school provides to inform families about how their students are doing throughout the year and preparing for the middle-school process. Parents reported that there is at least one adult at the school that knows their students well. School leaders support families in understanding expectations for college and career readiness and in understanding student progress.
Area of Focus

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.2 Pedagogy</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Developing</th>
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Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are becoming aligned to the school’s instructional focus on questioning, discussion and engagement that is informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching. However, student work products reflect uneven student participation.

Impact

Teaching practices across classrooms do not yet fully reflect the school’s beliefs about how students learn best. Teaching practices result in uneven student engagement in appropriately challenging tasks and demonstration of higher-order thinking skills by all learners.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders identified the development of students’ ability to make their thinking visible and ask higher-order questions as the school’s instructional focus. However, across grades and courses this practice is inconsistent with teacher-centered instruction in some classes. In a second-grade reading class, questions and answers to teacher-asked questions were all directed back to the teacher and when students were given an opportunity to turn to a partner to discuss their thinking, there was a lack of wait time. In contrast, in a third-grade writing class, students worked in small groups as they discussed the idea of what a community is, using a graphic organizer as they compared and contrasted the text features in two different texts and students cited the text during their discussions.

- In a fourth-grade Readers Workshop lesson focused on character analysis, students were sitting in small groups reading a passage and completing a graphic organizer that asks students to identify character traits from the passage and cite evidence from the passage to support their answer. Although students were sitting in groups, the majority of students were working independently and there was no evidence of assigned group roles for students. Students who were engaged in a discussion of the text did not reference the text. In a math class, students were working in groups on dividing whole numbers. When the teacher brought the class together to check for understanding however, there were primarily choral responses to the teacher-directed questions and the teacher moved on to the next question after the first student responded to the question, not allowing wait time for other students to respond.

- In a fifth-grade math class, students worked independently on problems focused on division of unit fractions by whole numbers using visual models and equations. They were then to turn to a partner to share their strategies and mathematical thinking. While the teachers circulated the room to monitor the progress of students, some students had finished their problem early and were waiting for their partners to finish. When asked, students responded they did not have an extension and they wished they had another problem to work on. In a second-grade reading class while the teacher was working with a small group of students in the back, the rest of the class worked independently on responding to questions about the key details in a text, but spent the majority of their time copying the questions from the board to their notebooks. Overall, teacher practices across classrooms demonstrate uneven student engagement in challenging tasks.
Findings

Curricula and academic tasks inconsistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills across grades and subject areas. Curricula and academic tasks reflect planning to cognitively engage learners.

Impact

While a diversity of learners, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities, have access to the curricula and tasks and are cognitively engaging, this is not yet evident in the majority of classrooms.

Supporting Evidence

- A review of lesson and unit plans demonstrates that some of them emphasize higher-order skills such as questioning and discussion. Some of the questions included in a second-grade reading lesson plan include, “What are goods and services?” and “Looking at page 7, what shows a good and what shows a service?” In a math lesson plan, the learning target stated that students can solve multi-digit division problems by using place value and basic multiplication facts. A kindergarten learning target states, “Today, I can identify the main topic of a text by drawing and writing important details about it.” The level of questioning and tasks evident across some grade and content areas inconsistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills for groups of students.

- Unit plans and pacing calendars describe the skills students will be able to demonstrate by the conclusion of the unit. For example, a math curriculum map states that students will be able to “Understand that 3-digit numbers represent amounts of hundreds, tens, and ones, describe 100 at a bundle of ten tens, and model base ten numbers within 1,000 with money.” A pacing calendar for English states, “Readers understand main ideas by looking closely at the facts and details used to support them, Writers understand how to convey information about main ideas and details through text features and illustrations, and learners understand how close observation can explain how and why things in the world change over time.” In some of the unit plans and pacing calendars, academic tasks emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order thinking skills.

- Some learners are supported in cognitively engaging tasks through the use of scaffolds. The scaffolds in a fifth-grade English Language Arts (ELA) lesson plan for a Socratic seminar on the First and Fourteenth Amendments included the frontloading vocabulary, providing students copies of the discussion questions and also posting them on chart paper, providing sentence starters and copies of the amendments students could refer to. The lesson provides that students will first participate in small discussions and write a paragraph about the reasons why it is necessary to protect the rights of the minority in a democracy. The lesson also specifies that students will facilitate the Socratic Seminar and that students in the outer circle will observe the participation of the students in the inner circle and students will also complete a self-reflection at the end of the lesson on their participation. As a result of curricular planning and refinement, students in some classes are supported in cognitively engaging tasks.
### Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use assessments, rubrics and grading policies in alignment with the school’s curricula and use these assessments to determine student progress toward goals across grades and content areas.

### Impact

Students are supported in their academic progress through actionable feedback and the teachers’ use of assessments results to make adjustments in curricula and instruction.

### Supporting Evidence

- An examination of rubrics indicates alignment with the school’s instructional focus. One example of a rubric used in English Language Arts on short writing responses focuses on the criteria of including facts or details from the text, including a topic sentence, having a detailed opinion and reason in their response and a detailed concluding statement. A ReadyGen tiered task rubric outlines the expected criteria for mastery, approaching mastery, or not mastering including three or more valid examples from the text and attempting to make an inference that is based on valid evidence. Based on the score received, the student reflected stating, “Next time I will use more evidence to support my answer.” Consequently, students are supported in their academic progress towards goals across grade levels and content areas.

- Evidence of teacher feedback on student work includes “glows, grows, and next steps.” One example states “Glows: You included facts from the text, used a topic sentence and a concluding statement. Grow: Consider using details about how the children lived and played back then. Next Step: Next time you can include even more details about how the children only had dirty streets and small, dark, crowded apartments to play.” During the student interview, students shared that in most of their classrooms, they received either verbal or written feedback on their assignments. One student stated that the feedback she received indicated she needed to work on including more details in her response and include transitions and a conclusion. Students also shared that they give peer-to-peer feedback by writing comments on Post-its that they place on the work. As a result of feedback from teachers and peers, students can articulate their next steps in meeting the school's goals for student progress.

- A review of documents provides evidence of the school’s grading policy that is communicated to staff, students, and parents. The main categories within the schoolwide grade policy are classroom assessment, projects, and participation. The grading policy also states that participation include group activities, student-to-student discourse, completion of individual tasks, attendance, and having required materials. The school has transitioned from using performance levels to percentages to communicate to families about the progress of their children. Common teacher-developed assessments are refined and analyzed during grade-level meetings and are used in math and ELA to measure student progress throughout the year including the beginning-of-year Measures of Student Learning (MOSL), performance tasks, midterms, and finals.
Additional Finding

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

School leaders support teacher development with effective feedback and next steps from frequent observations. Feedback based on the Danielson Framework for Teaching captures teachers’ strengths, challenges, and next steps.

Impact

Feedback articulates clear expectations and supports teachers in their reflection on instructional practices, resulting in pedagogical growth.

Supporting Evidence

- Frequent classroom observations provide feedback utilizing the Danielson Framework for Teaching as the standard for professionalism, quality instruction, and high expectations. These classroom visits are followed by written assessments of the activity, complete with feedback in the form of commendations and recommendations. For example, one observation report reviewed a Reader’s Workshop on Rachel Carson, focused on how writers can develop a concept about a particular subject or person through key details. “Commendations: Your lesson was well planned according to the Workshop model including new grouping aligned to new data received during professional development. Recommendations and Next steps: Instead of you reading all the text during the lesson, select exemplary readers to read and to model the reading. During your explicit teaching have your answers on sentence strips so this saves time and will increase the flow of the lesson.” Teachers are also given ideas about how to incorporate next steps such as teaching students to use accountable talk stem starters and to work on one talk stem at a time until students are well versed in it and then continue to add additional talk stems. Through frequent classroom observations and specific, reflective feedback, school leaders support the growth of teachers.

- Teacher observation reports include specific language from the Danielson Framework for Teaching that supports the rating, along with actionable next steps designed to help teachers improve student outcomes. An example of such feedback includes, “Commendations: The writing samples you displayed on your boards were adequate and displayed improvement of the students’ abilities. Recommendations: Pose questions designed to promote student thinking and understanding. Create a genuine discussion among students, providing adequate time for students to respond. Well-crafted questions are a great way for teachers to determine what students know, need to know, and misunderstand. Poorly-crafted questions do not provide students an opportunity to think.” Specific feedback such as that provided here articulates clear expectations and supports the development of instructional practices with a focus on the Danielson domains 3b-questioning and discussion and 3c-engaging students in learning.

- Teachers meet with school leaders to reflect on their own teaching practices, identifying goals for professional growth and exploring how school leaders can best support their progress. Teachers submit samples of tasks and feedback they have provided to students to school leaders who review and provide glows, grows, and next steps on task development and on providing feedback. An example reads, “Glow: The teacher comments have a positive and encouraging tone. Grow: The teacher feedback doesn't not include a Glow, Grow and a Next Step. The vast majority of the teacher comments are not standards-based or are too vague. Next Step: Create rubrics with four performance levels as per Principal’s October Memo.” As a result of feedback from school leaders, teachers are demonstrating growth in professional practice.
Findings

Most teachers are engaged in professional collaborations that are loosely and ineffectively connected to school goals and the inquiry approach in developing across the teams. Teams are analyzing assessment data and student work, but this work does not typically result in improved teacher practice or progress toward goals for students.

Impact

While teachers are engaged in professional collaborations, the analysis and use of student data and work to inform teacher practice is not fully developed and has limited impact on the progress for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers reported that there is now more work on student inquiry and examining student work, with a focus on assessment and differentiating instruction for groups of students that was not in place previously. Teachers meet weekly for inquiry work and to develop team meeting norms. According to the professional development calendar created by the new principal, there is a focus on building professional learning communities, curriculum planning with a focus on student discussion and engagement and on deepening the staff's understanding of the assessment cycle. Based on a review of documents and meetings agendas and minutes, the professional collaboration structure is in transition and the inquiry approach is developing across teams.

- Teachers participate in staff development that includes building professional learning communities and reviewing student data. A review of documents shows staff are supported by school leaders and instructional coaches in the collection of data and data chats led by school leaders with grade level teams at end of each module throughout the year where school leaders guide conversations around the analysis of student analysis and identifying gaps in student learning. Teachers were given time to analyze the data, looking at trends and patterns within the data and determining how to provide targeted interventions to address areas of need. There is evidence from agendas and sign-in sheets that multiple professional development sessions took place, but the level of teacher discussion varies across teams and there is not consistent documentation across teacher teams about how the evaluation of data is resulting in targeted supports or improvement in student progress.

- During an observation of the second-grade teacher team meeting, members of the team reflected on the progress of their students in solving word problems with a year-long focus on students with scores in the upper 2s and lower 3s on the fall MOSL math exam. During this specific meeting, they were reviewing the recent Module 3, Topic F assessment. The teachers observed that some students struggled with solving multi-step problems, but that most students could change numbers from unit and expanded form to into standard form. It was also observed that some students were still struggling with math symbols for greater than, less than and equal to. The team identified specific strategies they would use including drawing a place value chart and making an anchor chart outlining the necessary steps in identifying greater and less than and that they would try these strategies for two weeks and come back to assess their impact on student progress. While this grade team captured their analysis and next steps, a review of the written notes across grade levels found limited capturing of the teams’ conversations and next steps. While there is evidence that teams are meeting and beginning to look at student work using an inquiry process, currently this is not yet resulting in improved teacher practice or progress toward goals for students.