Quality Review Report

2018-2019

Park Slope Collegiate
Secondary School 15K464
237 7 Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11215

Principal: Jill Bloomberg

Dates of Review:
December 12, 2018 - December 13, 2018

Lead Reviewer: Kevin 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

Park Slope Collegiate serves students in grade 6 through grade 12. 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>To what extent does the school...</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<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>Well Developed</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>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Align assessments to curricula, use on-going assessment and grading practices, and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom levels</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### School Culture

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</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>Additional Finding</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>Area of Celebration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement

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

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings
School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to staff and provide professional development (PD). Teacher teams and staff establish a culture for learning that includes Regents exams and college preparatory coursework for all students.

Impact
Communication through teacher teams and PD around high expectations results in a culture of mutual accountability among staff and school leaders. Clear, focused, and effective feedback and guidance ensure that students are prepared for the next level and own their educational experience.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders conduct frequent classroom observations to provide feedback utilizing the Daniels Framework for Teaching as the standard for professionalism, quality instruction, and high expectations. A PD calendar makes clear that school leaders support teachers in their understanding of expectations in addressing topics such as planning curricula for access to rigorous content and engaging instruction, crafting units with attention to cumulative assessments, and sharing unit assessments across departments. Instructional coaching for improved teacher effectiveness and student achievement occurs as Algebra I and Living Environment teachers attend regular Peer-Enabled Restructured Classroom (PERC) PD aimed at increasing the number of students earning college readiness scores on Regents exams. A social studies coach meets regularly with teachers to help maintain the rigor of social studies courses, assist teachers in aligning curricula to the new social studies standards and State Regents exams and to incorporate the instructional shift toward historical thinking. Atlantic Theater Company (ATC) partnership with ELA teachers and their work with teaching artists emphasize the role of voice in student writing. As a result, provided training allows school leaders and staff to share a mutual accountability for high expectations.

- Content-area and grade-level teacher leaders create mutual accountability among teams by leading meetings with specific goals focused on increased student achievement and next steps assigned to each participant that will be carried out and reported on during the next meeting. Teacher-led PD around best practices promotes equity, engagement, and mutual commitment with rigorous curricula and results in high expectations for teachers and for students.

- Teacher teams and staff establish a culture for learning that systematically communicates high expectations that help prepare all students for their next level of education. All eighth graders are enrolled in Regents Living Environment and Algebra I courses in order to increase their access to rigorous curricula. The PERC program in Living Environment and Algebra I communicates the expectation of college readiness scores on Living Environment and Algebra Regents exams and supports student attainment of these scores. The college counselor provides guidance for all high school students on the college process including transcript review and analysis starting in ninth grade. Eleventh graders and twelfth graders meet weekly in college advisories in order to navigate the college application process resulting in increased application to and enrollment in college. All twelfth graders are enrolled in a college preparatory Participation in Government course. Math and science sequencing culminates in Calculus and Physics or College Now courses. All eleventh-grade students participate in a semester-long, work-based internship which introduces them to the world of work and increases career readiness and awareness. As a result, ninety percent of students have successfully completed approved college or career preparatory courses and exams. This is a forty-one percent increase over the city average.
Area of Focus

Findings

Across classrooms, student work products reflect high levels of student thinking and participation. Teaching strategies provide multiple entry points into the curricula.

Impact

Although students demonstrate higher-order thinking skills, across many classrooms, teaching strategies such as questioning do not provide strategic use of multiple entry points for all learners or high-quality extensions thus, limiting students demonstrating higher-order thinking and ownership of learning.

Supporting Evidence

- During an eighth-grade Algebra class, a lesson on counting antibodies and tracking amounts of medicine with linear functions included native language translations for students who needed it on their functions performance task. Students were using a counting antibodies task rubric that outlined fifteen specific steps and guided students through each section. Some students worked with partners seated next to them and others worked alone even though they had partners. Four students in the room sat alone, some as a result of behavior management. The teachers and Teaching Assistant Scholars (TAS) circulated around the room and checked in with students to offer additional scaffolded support. During a Calculus class, students worked together in groups with opportunities to support each other along with the Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) teachers and paraprofessional supporting students in the classroom. Students were engaged in their work as one teacher was carrying a collection sheet of information on a clipboard and recording notes on specific students. While multiple entry opportunities were evident in classrooms, they were not strategically provided and evident in the vast majority of classrooms, nor were high-quality extensions provided. Therefore, not all students were able to demonstrate higher-order thinking skills.

- While there were examples across classrooms of student discussions reflecting high levels of student thinking and participation, this was not evident across the vast majority of classrooms as some students did not participate in discussion opportunities, thus not demonstrating their ownership of learning during the lesson. During a sixth-grade ELA class, the teacher modeled during the do now, “What is a theme?” The teacher asked “How can we search for a theme?” and asked students to turn and talk to discuss. The students then engaged in a share out with the whole class about what they discussed. However, during a seventh-grade ELA class, students had an opportunity to turn and talk, but in one group students did not talk to each other, sat silently waiting for the next step. Furthermore, the teacher-to-student questioning involved a number of students in the room who shared their ideas of where the literary terms were in the text, but there were some groups who did not participate during this whole-class discussion.

- During a ninth-grade English class, students worked in groups to answer text-based questions about who has power in the novel Mind of My Mind. Student groups chose which character they thought had the power in the novel, and then searched for textual evidence that aligned with their choice as they charted the evidence on their group’s chart paper. A government class included a seminar discussion by students about gentrification in Bedford-Stuyvesant. The discussion referenced historical context as students built their understanding of the reasons behind gentrification and their ideas about it based on information from multiple sources. Several students participated in the discussion, some multiple times; however, others did not participate. While some students were able to articulate their learning, other students were not able to take ownership of their learning.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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Findings

Curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and Next Generation Learning Standards while strategically integrating the instructional shifts. Rigorous habits and higher-order skills are coherently embedded in academic tasks across grades and subjects with an emphasis on writing using sources.

Impact

Curricular alignment results in coherence across grades and subject areas promoting college and career readiness for all learners. Thought-provoking tasks require all students to demonstrate their thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- In addition to alignment to the Common Core and content standards, curricular documents across content areas are aligned to the State Next Generation Learning Standards. Courses, lesson and unit plans and curriculum maps reflect full integration of the instructional shifts embedded across content areas. For example, lesson plans in ELA across grades emphasize writing from sources to support a claim and also include the balance between information and literary text. A math lesson plan incorporates precision and accuracy by having students understand the concept of limits and be able to determine the limit of a function graphically and by using a table of values. Coherence across content areas is evident in unit plans which outline that students will support claims with evidence from texts across ELA and social studies. Year-long essential questions appear across all grades and content and are designed to engage students as they learn new information and acquire new skills. Curricular documents also identify the enduring understandings that connect all students to the Common Core and Next Generation Standards as well as to the academic discourse of the larger field of study. Social studies courses across grades promote historical thinking skills such as researching multiple sources and text features.

- Curricular documents demonstrate academic tasks that emphasize higher-order skills for all students. In an eighth-grade social studies unit plan, students are asked to evaluate various perspectives and biases on the topic of slavery. In science curricular documents, students pose questions, seek answers, and develop solutions to build their scientific knowledge, such as designing their own ecosystem showing the interaction of biotic and abiotic factors. Lesson plans include modifications for students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), including the use of graphic organizers. Lesson plans involving English Language Learners (ELLs) include the use of key vocabulary words and definitions and visuals so ELLs are able to demonstrate their thinking according to the same high-level standards expected of all students. Rigorous habits embedded in a coherent way across content curricula are included in tasks incorporating essay writing through literary analysis, document-based, and on-demand. For example, in a sixth-grade ELA lesson plan, after developing a text-based claim, students are expected to reread the text through the lens of their claim to search for the most compelling evidence that can support it.

- Academic tasks that consistently challenge students to utilize rigorous habits in the course of instruction are embedded in lesson plans. In a physics lesson plan, students analyze the relationships between force, mass, gravity, and the motion of objects. A social studies lesson plan requires students to interpret and analyze historical documents. Additionally, students are to consistently write and connect their writing to evidence from the text. A social studies lesson plan asks students how does Harriet Beecher Stowe try to persuade her readers to abolish slavery and to provide a quote from the text to support their claim. In an ELA unit plan on a historical fiction book club, students are asked to gather and incorporate research that supports their writing of an informational text angle to an historical account.
Additional Finding

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>2.2 Assessment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers use assessments, rubrics, and a grading-for-mastery policy that are aligned with the school’s curricula and offer a clear portrait of student mastery. Teachers use student assessment data to adjust curricula and instruction and inform teacher teams’ inquiry work.

Impact

High-quality assessment practices provide actionable and meaningful feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement. Common assessment analysis and curricular and instructional adjustments lead to all students demonstrating increased mastery.

Supporting Evidence

- Across the vast majority of classrooms, samples of student work products show teacher-written actionable and meaningful feedback directing students to the steps they should take to strengthen their work. On a participation in government Gowanus history lab piece, the feedback read: “Historical events are marked by a specific time and place; be sure that in your essay you are clear about time and place when applicable.” On a social studies essay, a teacher commented, “Copy Title Presentation Rule AND add: Always present the title exactly as it is on task.”; and on a case-study essay assignment, “Consider how the criminal justice system in the Bronx shapes the CONTEXT of your argument (your third source will help you).” Students spoke about the meaningful feedback they received from their teachers on a math assignment, “Using my notes from previous class work and incorporating my strategies from that to the similar problems in the project helped me improve my score in my later work assignments.”

- The school has a common grading-for-mastery policy that focuses on assessment of understanding of specific skills and lesson objectives. Students have multiple opportunities to revise and resubmit work and to retake on-demand assessments such as resubmitting their analysis essay after feedback from their teacher to analyze the questions to better explain their claim in the essay. Teachers use rubrics to evaluate student work across subjects such as a one-page rubric for Algebra I, a non-fiction narrative writing rubric in ELA, and a short essay rubric in social studies. Rubrics for written and spoken analysis of text are used by teachers and students to set expectations and to assess performance. In ELA and social studies classes, student writing and speaking exhibits understanding of fiction, non-fiction, narrative and informational texts and the development of historical thinking skills. During the student meeting, one student reported about using rubrics, “I usually read the highest and the weakest levels and I know what I have to do and what I should not do. Context and information are really important.”

- Department-wide common assessments are aligned with State assessments and standards, particularly to build students’ writing skills. The school emphasizes common writing assessments across content areas and grade levels, including literary analysis essays, poetry analysis, comparison essays, narrative essays, document-based essays, thematic essays, and argumentative essays and on-demand essays. These are embedded in learning units across content areas. At the end of each unit, grade teams make data-informed decisions, using formative and summative data, to revise the curricula and address identified student learning needs. Grade teams have incorporated more academic language instruction and increase student writing as measured by on-demand writing. As a result, there was an increase in the four-year graduation rate from 64 percent in school year 2016-2017 to 82 percent in school year 2017-2018.
**Findings**

School leaders support the development of teachers with effective feedback and next steps from frequent cycles of classroom observation and analysis of student work and data. Feedback to teachers accurately captures strengths, challenges, and next steps using the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*.

**Impact**

Feedback articulates clear expectations for teacher practice and supports teacher development that promotes professional growth.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Frequent cycles of classroom observation result in feedback from school leaders utilizing the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. For example, in one observation report, the feedback included, “The next step is to explicitly and regularly connect these clear and important understandings and questions to the practice several times during the class period so that students can learn that math is a language we use to represent real numerical, quantitative relationships. Some students will engage with the procedures without any need to understand what they mean. But others need to see the procedures in context and ultimately our goal is for all of them to see the relationship.” Feedback from school leaders also includes analysis of student work from the lesson, such as, “In this lesson, rather than filling in the blank with the correct conjugation of ser or ir, students could have written an original or fictional account of an experience using both verbs regularly in the preterite.”

- In addition to the regular observation process and teacher development, teachers meet with school leaders to discuss observations, areas of celebration and next steps. New-teacher mentoring is provided for all new teachers by being paired with experienced, highly effective teachers supporting their development. In addition, a new-teacher support group meets bi-weekly for first and second year teachers and led by highly effective teachers from the school community.

- Teachers reported that the support and supervision they have received from school leaders has supported their development as teachers. One teacher reported about the observation process, she indicated that she received feedback about not giving students enough opportunity to discuss, as she would only call on the same students who raised their hands. Because of the feedback, she now incorporates more table discussion; all students in the group get to share out, and she prompts students to share out in whole-class discussions what someone in the group shared at their table. Teachers’ average score for demonstrating knowledge of the content and pedagogy component as measured by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* at the end of the 2017-2018 school year was 3.30. Currently, during the 2018-2019 school year, the average is climbing and is 3.39. The creating an environment of respect and rapport component has increased from 3.48 at the end of the 2017-2018 school year to 3.57 during the current 2018-2019 school year.
### Quality Indicator: 4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development

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### Findings

The vast majority of teachers are engaged in inquiry-based, structured professional collaborations. Distributed leadership structures are embedded.

### Impact

Teacher instructional capacity has strengthened while implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards and instructional shifts has been promoted. Teachers play an integral role in focusing on the instructional goals as well as teacher teams building schoolwide coherence to support student achievement.

### Supporting Evidence

- During a social studies inquiry team meeting, teachers reviewed assessing for understanding. Teachers used the tuning protocol and had roles defined such as facilitator, presenter, timer and recorder. Teachers discussed a government class tied to semester-long essential questions, unit progression, tasks and rubrics. The team reviewed student use of research to study neighborhoods and assessed the use of historical thinking skills in students' writing. Teachers discussed how public housing is seen as a solution to the next unit. Teachers reviewed projects involving the neighborhoods of Gowanus and Bedford-Stuyvesant. The teachers reviewed three different student examples: exceptional, standard, and below expectations and had an opportunity to ask clarifying questions of the presenting teacher. Teachers discussed how students were demonstrating or not demonstrating historical thinking skills and what types of supports students needed to complete their task. As a result of this inquiry team meeting, the team agreed to identify what students are lacking and how they could support them with scaffolds to help them demonstrate their historical thinking skills.

- Teacher team meetings strengthen schoolwide instructional coherence. A teacher reported, “In our vertical grade-level meetings, we vertically plan how we can support a specific skill in seventh and eighth grade classrooms with essential questions for each unit. We're in constant communication to address student learning needs further.” Increased student achievement is noted by the percentage of students on the honor roll; both the merit honor roll and the principal’s honor roll show a schoolwide increase from 30 percent at the end of last year to 32 percent at the end of marking period two this year. The greatest increase is noted in the twelfth grade, from 22 percent last year to 28 percent this year thus far.

- Embedded distributed leadership is exemplified in the work of the lead teachers from each department. The lead teachers also lead content-area inquiry team meetings and cohort grade-level team meetings to drive key decisions that affect student learning across the school. For example, the lead teachers led their respective teams in vertical team meetings to vertically plan to support specific skills in seventh and eighth grade classrooms by determining essential questions for each unit. Also, a Peer Collaborative Teacher (PCT) has been formally trained on Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS) and has a reduced teaching program in order to train teachers on CPS and to lead them through the CPS process with individual students. The PCT works with grade teams to identify students who could benefit from the CPS process and supports teachers in initiating the CPS process. PCT leads schoolwide PD around CPS.