Quality Review Report

2018-2019

P.S. M169 - Robert F. Kennedy
K-12 all grades 75M169
110 East 88 Street
Manhattan
NY 10128
Principal: Eleyna Rivas

Dates of Review:
May 16, 2019 - May 17, 2019

Lead Reviewer: Lenneen Gibson
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

Instructional Core

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</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>
</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>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## School Quality Ratings continued

### School Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<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>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>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Systems for Improvement

<table>
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<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<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>
<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>Well Developed</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>
<td>Proficient</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>
<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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations through walkthroughs, checklists, and a social emotional framework. Partnerships with families are effectively established through varied platforms of communication.

Impact

Mutual accountability for schoolwide expectations are upheld through teacher-led intervisitations and teacher team meetings. The school staff uses multiple communication platforms and workshops to support student learning in the home, thus partnering with families.

Supporting Evidence

- High expectations for instruction are communicated through classroom walkthroughs that are aligned to specific components of the Danielson Framework for Teaching. The classroom walkthroughs focused on planning and preparation, the classroom environment, and instruction. Administrators used a checklist called the P169 Checklist of Expectations and Non-negotiables for 2018-19 during the walkthroughs. Feedback to the teachers included accessibility to student portfolios, ensuring leveled books are represented in the classroom library, ensuring students are engaged in discourse, and the questions posed during the lesson are reflective of rigor. High expectations are articulated through written administrative memos that delineated procedures for classroom set-up, lunchtime procedures, and a suggested lesson plan template. High expectations for instruction has led to a ten percent increase in effective teachers from November 2018 to February 2019 according to Advance data. Additionally, there has been a seven percent increase in the planning and preparation component of the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

- Expectations for professional development (PD) are delineated through the PD plan that is aligned to the school’s instructional focus of explicit learning targets and infusing Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS) by the use of a social emotional framework exemplifying being Kind, Appropriate, Respectful, Mature, and Accountable (KARMA). There were teacher facilitated PD sessions on lesson planning, including the crafting of explicit learning targets, and the reviewing of the PBIS system to equitably award students for exemplifying these attributes. In addition, PD sessions on restorative circles were conducted. Teachers turnkey PD to the staff when they attend external PD opportunities. Teachers hold themselves accountable for these expectations by conducting their own intervisitations with provisions of teacher feedback on PBIS and instructional practices. During teacher team meetings known as Collaboratives, teachers hold themselves accountable by initiating their own protocols to support school goals and the instructional focus.

- High expectations connected to student achievement are articulated through structures such as extended Tuesdays. Parents are kept abreast of their child’s progress through online communication platforms, communication notebooks, and workshops that extend the learning in the home. Parents attended GO Math! workshops to unpack the program, provide homework and New York State (NYS) testing support for families. In addition, parents are invited to college preparation workshops that support the families in a college attending culture that serves as another layer of support to the College Access for All program beginning in the seventh grade. Lastly, teachers created resources for the parents such as, “How do we solve 3-digit subtraction problems with regrouping?” Parents shared anecdotes of the personalized support they received throughout the Individualized Educational Program (IEP) process and how their children thrived due to the support.
Findings
The majority of teachers are engaged in inquiry work through Collaboratives. Distributed leadership practices are in place including such roles as the instructional and behavioral coaches.

Impact
The work during Collaboratives is leading to schoolwide instructional coherence. Distributed leadership practices are in place, but are leading toward integrating teacher voice in decision-making that affects student learning across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- A third and fourth grade Collaboratives team was observed engaging in inquiry work that was centered on the use of data from a pre-assessment writing task to inform the deployment of strategies for students who did not meet the performance standard. Using a protocol teachers ascertained what students needed in order to be successful in the opinion writing unit. Areas that teachers identified in need of support included writing a topic sentence, providing reasons, the use of transitional words, and constructing a conclusion. A strategy to support students in writing reasons and examples in their writing was the Opinion, Reason, Example, Restate graphic organizer. To support students with the varied use of transitional phrases in their writing, the team agreed to create a transitional phrase list and an anchor chart to find transitional words in a close reading exercise. Lastly, an opinion checklist was adopted to support students in writing a hook in their essays. As a result of this collaboration, the teachers have refined the curriculum to include stronger learning targets and share resources and best practices with one another, thus strengthening instructional capacity. Instructional coherence is beginning to take hold with teachers enacting similar end-of-unit events such as that of the poetry unit at the time of this visit.

- A review of teacher Collaborative notes revealed a middle school team met to support students on their expository writing pieces. The teachers shared their lesson ideas on introducing students to supporting opinions with evidence, examining the crafting of thesis statements, and the use of because statements. Next steps identified were the use of circle and tree maps to construct five paragraph essays. Another grade team met to support the team goal of 70 percent of second graders will score 70 percent or higher on teacher-created assessments that focus on the numbers and operations in base ten standard. Over the course of successive Collaborative meetings, teachers developed an action plan that included the research of literature, a focus on vocabulary, and a list a commonly used words. Teachers analyzed student work using a protocol, and formed student inquiry groups, however, based upon the review of student work, teachers did not meet their goal. Students have shown positive growth on the Student Annual Needs Determination Inventory (SANDI) assessments, and teachers sharing best practices has increased their instructional capacity, thus the work of the Collaborative teams is beginning to lead to instructional coherence.

- Distributed leadership practices are in place such as the instructional and behavioral coaches which has led to overall school improvement. The instructional coach has worked with teachers during Collaboratives to design, refine, and implement the school created English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum called Rise Up which is aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and begins in grade three. The behavioral coach worked with a team of teachers to revise the school’s social emotional program grounded in KARMA, changing one attribute from responsible to respectful in order to better align the expectations to lessons and relevancy. As a result of these distributed leadership practices, there has been a 51 percent reduction in incidences and a 50 percent decrease in students out of location throughout the day according to the Online Occurrence System (OORS).
Additional Finding

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

Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricular documents align to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the shifts of academic vocabulary and citing textual evidence. Curricula and academic tasks emphasize rigor.

Impact

The establishing of the use of the school-designed ELA curriculum Rise Up, and the integration of the instructional shifts is promoting college and career readiness so that learning is accessible for a variety of learners.

Supporting Evidence

- Lesson plans and units of study across grades and content areas contained elements such as learning targets, references to the workshop model of instruction, and references to the PBIS program that delineates the behaviors that exemplify KARMA. Alignment to the instructional shifts of academic vocabulary and citing textual evidence were referenced in the documents. The curriculum team developed the ELA curriculum, Rise Up, for grades three through eight that is aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards with a focus on academic vocabulary and citing textual evidence. A third-grade unit plan focuses on exploring persuasive texts and opinion writing. A task required students to first engage in classroom activities to practice the skill set needed to devise a strategy to respectfully agree or disagree with a peer after reading a social story. Students used visual supports for their opinion. This activity culminated with an activity that required students to compare and contrast two topics and include their positions in a persuasive text. The task was tiered by skill level. The unit plan infused social-emotional targets requiring students to write opinion pieces on attributes of KARMA.

- In an eighth-grade ELA lesson plan, students evaluated an exemplar argumentative essay in tandem with a scaffold to deconstruct and examine key vocabulary needed to plan an argumentative essay. Lastly, the lesson referenced a prompt for students to demonstrate accountability when in the cafeteria. A learning target for a seventh-grade math lesson plan indicated that students, “…will apply percent to real life problems.” The lesson was aligned to the Common Core mathematical shift of application as the mathematical practices were modeled using the workshop model of instruction.

- A third-grade lesson plan showed alignment to the standards that addressed the use of text features as well as the ability to answer text dependent questions as the basis for student answers, thus emphasizing higher order skills. This lesson was the inception of the research unit. Students used graphic organizers to generate research topics to organize their information before reading a text and searching on the internet for their selected topic. The task was differentiated by skill level with students in extra need of assistance receiving more prompting and word bank supports. A third-grade math lesson plan aligned to the instructional shift of application tasked the students with measuring lengths of everyday items while comparing and contrasting their data. Subsequently, student tasks were differentiated by difficulty. Higher performing students wrote about this experience in their math journal, while the remainder of the students verbally discussed their experience in a partner share.
Additional Finding

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.2 Pedagogy</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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Findings

Across classrooms, school leaders communicated that students learn best when the learning objectives are explicit and the learning environment exemplifies KARMA. Teaching strategies allow for the use of scaffolds into the curricula.

Impact

The use of multiple entry points into the lesson that is informed by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* has resulted in student production of meaningful work products.

Supporting Evidence

- The administrative team articulated that students learn best when they exemplify KARMA behavior, there are explicit learning targets for the lesson, and the workshop model for instruction is utilized. In a kindergarten through second grade 8:1:1 class, the learning target required students to identify cause and effect in a fictional story using details. The teacher modeled the practice and showed the students a short video during the “I do” portion of the lesson. Using a differentiated graphic organizer, students identified the cause and effect examples from the text, *Alexander, Who Used to be Rich* while the teacher rewarded the students for demonstrating KARMA. In a 12:1:1 ELA class, students constructed a short response, developed a claim, and used text evidence to answer the prompt, “Should college athletes get paid?” Students used a differentiated graphic organizer to organize their argument on whether college athletes should be paid. Student work products enabled student thinking to be visible as students noted the pros and cons for paying student athletes.

- In a 12:1:1 ELA class, students evaluated an exemplar argumentative essay, identifying a claim and a reason, while citing textual evidence from the play, *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Students used a graphic organizer entitled, Explicit Vocabulary Instruction that they used to deconstruct key words such as topic, and thesis. A student identified a topic as “The main idea for the story” and the thesis as, “The claim.” Students had access to a concept map that deconstructed the organization of an argumentative essay by isolating components such as the introduction, thesis, two supporting paragraphs, a counterargument, and a conclusion. In a kindergarten 6:1:1 ELA class, students were able to answer no and yes to questions. For example, a question posed to a student was, “When I want to play with my favorite toy, I say?” The student used an adaptive device to respond “Yes.” Student groups were differentiated based on student need, thus multiple entry points into the task provided access to all students.

- In a kindergarten through second grade 8:1:1 math class, students were tasked with showing addition using the terminology, by putting together. The teacher modeled for the students how to show six plus one using counters. Students referred to an anchor chart entitled, Solving Addition Problems for support. The teacher queried the students, “How am I going to show eight plus two with only a ten frame?” A student replied, “Use my counter.” In a third-grade 12:1:1 ELA class, students used a model text and graphic organizer to write a persuasive and opinion essay. Students then used leveled texts and their graphic organizers to plan their persuasive essays. Small group instruction occurred in the front of the room with a choice of supports such as a t-chart with categories of “I like” and “I don’t like” or a Venn diagram. Through the use of a variety of supports and scaffolds, students are able to engage in challenging tasks and demonstrate higher order thinking skills.
### Additional Finding

#### Quality Indicator: 2.2 Assessment

| Rating: | Proficient |

#### Findings

Teachers use summative assessments to determine student progress across the grades. Teachers use NYS approved rubrics and student-friendly checklists that are aligned to the school’s curricula.

#### Impact

The results of summative assessments are used to inform adjustments to instruction and track student progress. Feedback to students is actionable and apprises students of their next steps.

#### Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use assessment data such as SANDI to inform IEPs for students. Teachers analyzed the 2017-18 SANDI results and noted that there needed to be a focus on teaching to the standards of the reading of informational texts in ELA, and measurement and data, as well as operations and algebraic thinking in math. As a result of this targeted instructional focus, students were reassessed in the Fall of 2018 and the Spring of 2019, resulting in an overall 17 percentage point increase in ELA and math as well as a 25 percent increase of students moving to the least restrictive environment. Teachers use Running Record data to inform instruction with a focus on skill sets such as identifying the main idea and citing textual evidence. Since the beginning of the school year to the time of the visit, 53 percent of all students moved up at least one reading level as per the latest Running Records assessment.

- Teachers administer baseline, midline, and endline assessments in Fundations. All classes showed positive growth from September 2018 to May 2019, with students showing ranges of 82 percent to 92 percent passing. Teachers and school leaders memorialize student performance in their writing via the ELA Growth over Common Core Aligned Curriculum Units document. Each grade has a specific Common Core writing standard of focus such as W.3.4 in grade three, which is to produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose. This standard is tracked across such units as memoir, folklore, expository, rising skills and opinion (not yet assessed). Students in grades three through five showed proficiency in the rising skills unit. Teachers also track student progress on Go Math! summative assessments. Teachers use this data to note students who demonstrated mastery for skills such as renaming fractions for subtraction. This is used to inform groups for students in need of reteaching or enrichment work.

- Teachers use EngageNY and modified rubrics to provide feedback to students in the form of glows and grows that commend students and apprise them of their next steps. An ELA task required students to analyze a poem and an informational text to compare and contrast the themes and main ideas in both texts. Students answered comprehension questions using textual evidence to substantiate their answers. A student was commended for the way he or she restated the question. The grow recommended that the student needed more support in the editing process. Another sample of student work was assessed with a student-friendly checklist. Students were tasked with matching pictures to determine the sequence of events. The student matched all of the sequence correctly, but still needed help with creating his sentences. Students used verbal cues to show they understood what the feedback meant.
Additional Finding

| Quality Indicator: | 4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision | Rating: | Proficient |

Findings
School leaders and coaches capture strengths, challenges, and next steps in observation reports that are aligned to the school's instructional focus of explicit usage of learning targets, the employing of the workshop model for instruction and the infusion of KARMA into lessons. School leaders use the Measures of Teacher Practice (MOTP) data to inform PD and succession plans for teachers.

Impact
Feedback to teachers articulates clear expectations to promote teacher professional growth, development, and reflection.

Supporting Evidence

- A review of an observation report, revealed the feedback commended the teacher for acknowledging the students that demonstrated KARMA, the usage of the workshop model, and the questions posed promoted student thinking. The recommendations cited were providing opportunities for students to pose questions to one another, and pairing students together to serve as a resource for one another. Feedback on another observation lauded a teacher for using the workshop model for instruction and the use of graphic organizers for students to successfully complete the assigned task. A next step for the teacher was a reminder to utilize resources in the classroom such as a paraprofessional in order to ensure that student groups remain on task. Teachers stated that support for the development of their practice is driven by the feedback received from administrators and content coaches who model instructional practices for the teachers to promote growth and reflection in their practice. At the time of the visit, the MOTP data showed 90 percent of the teachers were effective.

- School leaders and coaches provide targeted feedback to teachers who demonstrated challenges. A log of assistance delineated the series of informal and formal observations conducted, the supports that need to be in place, such as clear and explicit learning targets and an articulation of classroom expectations. A teacher was commended for the print-rich classroom environment and needed support in crafting clear learning targets, thus leading to the next steps of designing coherent instruction, a component of the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Subsequent classroom visits showed supports in effective questioning and employing the workshop model of instruction. Observation reports showed the progression of performance that was overall developing and ineffective, to effective and highly effective practices in questioning, discussion, and designing coherent instruction.

- The administrative team made data-informed decisions that resulted in the delivery of PD and devised succession plans connected to teachers. A review of the MOTP data showed that teachers struggled in the areas of demonstrating knowledge of content and pedagogy, in addition to designing coherent instruction. Instructional coaches facilitated a series of PD sessions on the backward design of lesson planning, in addition to the use of protocols. Succession plans connected to teachers included the assent of classroom teachers to an instructional coach and a behavior specialist.