Quality Review Report

2018-2019

Paula Hedbavny School

K-8 06M278

421 W 219Th St
Manhattan
NY 10034

Principal: Lillian Reyes

Dates of Review:
March 28, 2019 - March 29, 2019

Lead Reviewer: Phyllis Siwiec
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

Paula Hedbavny School serves students in grade K through grade 8. 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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</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>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Developing</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>Developing</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>Developing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### School Quality Ratings continued

#### School Culture

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Celebration</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>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Area of Celebration

**Additional Finding**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<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>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Systems for Improvement

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the schools instructional goals and meet student learning needs, as evidenced by meaningful student work products</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Additional Finding

**Proficient**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<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>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<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>Developing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<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>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<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>Developing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings

School leaders and faculty work together building a positive school culture implementing structures aligned with Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and Beyond Differences Club.

Impact

A safe, inclusive environment for learning exists where all voices are welcomed and valued. Each student is known well by at least one adult and social-emotional development, supported by a guidance counselor, dean, social worker and other faculty, are aligned with student learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- Several initiatives offer students opportunities to engage in meaningful collaboration to create safe spaces where relevant issues and ideas can be discussed. Students practice character building and respect by following the PBIS program called Tiger Tickets. There is a reflection sheet system for student conflicts; they can complete a form and submit it to their teacher or administration. Then, they work with students to decide the best way to address situations going forward. The staff believes in restorative practices. These programs provide students with strategies they can use if they are put in an uncomfortable situation either as a bystander or one who is directly involved. Speakers are welcomed to the school to discuss bullying or character development, in addition to the workshops led by the social worker and school guidance counselor. The onsite Relationship Abuse Prevention Program (RAPP) social worker sees at-risk students and offers workshops in anti-bullying, and one-on-one counseling and support for those in domestic abuse situations for staff, students, and parents as well. Staff, students and parents report that the school is a safe, welcoming place. The inclusive culture begins with the school’s multicultural, diverse staff that celebrates birthdays and holidays and share in their own cultures with each other and their students. In addition, regarding students’ perceptions of how their own culture is respected, 98 percent of students say that their teachers respect their culture or background as reported in the Learning Environment Survey.

- Meetings with families are facilitated for home language in Spanish, Albanian or other. The Beyond Differences Club promotes the diversity that exists within the school community to support an inclusive school culture through student-led initiatives. In addition, as a No Place for Hate school, school leadership consistently communicates to staff, students, and families the values entailed with this status with their Three Rs (Respect yourself, Respect Others, Respect your Environment). Academic accomplishments are celebrated through Tiger Scholar of the Month and Honor Roll. Student voice is valued and encouraged through student government and the Schoolwide Enrichment Model (SEM) whose major goal is the application of gifted education pedagogy to total school improvement. SEM provides enriched learning experiences and higher-learning standards for all children and includes community involvement. Middle school students volunteer to become Recess Rangers to facilitate lunchtime and help students have a more enjoyable lunchtime, less conflict during recess. Also, an initiative has students volunteering to sit with students at lunch who are sitting alone as one student shared, “We are ending social isolation.”

- Structures that ensure that each student is known well by at least one adult start with entering school in the morning as the principal and other school leaders greet each student. They are receptive to being there if any student needs assistance. In addition, there are adults, the guidance counselor and dean who work with restorative justice if needed. Students can work with conflict resolution. The SEM program also provides contact with small groups of students studying an interest area facilitated by an adult. The RAPP social worker is available. The librarian reportedly has an excellent rapport with students as the library is open for quiet socializing, computers and students can tutor each other.
Findings
Curricula and academic tasks reflect planning that inconsistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills across grades and subjects.

Impact
Student accessibility to curricula and tasks and cognitive engagement for a variety of learners is limited.

Supporting Evidence

- Lesson plans are inconsistent in emphasizing rigorous habits and higher-order thinking skills. A grade-five lesson in English Language Arts (ELA) states that “Students will be able to understand the question and find evidence, quotes, and use elaboration to support.” The lesson contains the State ELA Test Extended Response Outline that describes a four-paragraph essay format. Even though this is an Integrated Co-teaching (ICT) class, all students, receive the same non-fiction article to read and then write a response. The lesson plan does not include tasks that emphasize higher-order thinking skills for students with disabilities or English Language Learners (ELLs). In a grade-two ELA lesson plan, it states that “Students will be able to develop 1 to 3 questions and participate in shared research to answer questions and build their knowledge about natural events and how they affect people.” There are extension lists so students can challenge themselves to write more than one question and answer. On the other hand, in a grade-six (ICT) math lesson with a focus on 4-quadrant coordinate planes, students will be able to plot points in a 4-quadrant coordinate plane to create polygons with several calculations of perimeters and areas, moving toward three-dimensional models with exploration of volume and surface area. Differentiation is designed for four different problems that range in complexity so that all students in the class are appropriately challenged. There are also nine different modifications for those who need the additional support. Thus, some lessons reflect rigorous tasks and higher-order thinking skills and some have limited opportunities.

- The review of instructional planning documents reveals that there is inconsistency in accessibility for a variety of learners. For example, in a second-grade ELA lesson plan, students begin in a whole group with the teacher leading the discussion of how natural events affect people. After the whole group discussion, students are directed to move to desks to independently create one or two questions about their text before working in a group where they share their question with one student at a time. The rest of the group answers the question and work together to find evidence that supports the response. However, most lesson plans have limited references to thought-provoking tasks and higher-order thinking skills along with access to the curriculum for ELLs and students with disabilities. Therefore, gaps in the design of tasks limit higher levels of thinking and challenging work for students.

- Teachers shared that they modify curriculum with vocabulary words, sentence starters, and coded annotation. Further, any sort of modification is developed through assessments while looking for gaps and addressing those standards that are not being met. Grade partners guide each other through the process. In a ReadyGen unit focusing on Charlotte’s Web, teachers moved the unit from the beginning of the year to later in the year as students in grade two needed more experience and practice reading longer texts in order to feel confident and sufficiently skilled. The rearrangement proved to be more successful for students. Although most lesson plans had no accommodations or provisions for ELLs and students with disabilities, some noted white boards for practice work, graphic organizers for visual arrangement and planning for those who need help visual ways to organize information; heterogeneous groupings to support a range of learners through cooperative skills.
Across classrooms, teaching strategies are mostly teacher-centered and inconsistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula.

Student discussion and work products do not yet consistently reflect high levels of thinking and participation in challenging tasks with limited opportunities for students with varied needs to demonstrate their learning.

Student work products did not display consistent levels of higher-order thinking across classrooms. In a grade-five ELA class, students compared two different articles about Ben Franklin. All students were assigned the same article to read and analyze in order to answer several questions to which all students needed to respond. In a grade-three math lesson, there were three identified student groups, below, on level and above grade level in math. The task was split into three different goals, one for each group; however, all students were assigned the same problem. In a grade-two ELA and science integrated lesson, students worked in small table groups that had limited student interaction and discussion. There were differently leveled books as resources about natural disasters. Some students waited for help from the teacher; some were disengaged and not productive. The level of engagement was varied along with a demonstration of higher-order thinking skills.

In some classes, the instruction and discussions were teacher-centered, with missed opportunities for high-levels of student participation. For example, in a kindergarten math class, students sat on a rug for the entire observed teacher-centered lesson and answered one student at a time with small variations on subtraction problems. In an ICT class, the discussion pattern was controlled by the teacher, with few students contributing high-level responses. Scaffolding and non-differentiation of reading material were limited resulting in some students not engaged with limited discussions and uneven levels of student thinking and participation.

In a grade-eight Humanities lesson, the class was preparing for a Socratic seminar to be held the next day. Working in heterogeneously organized groups, students read and analyzed primary and secondary sources in order to understand various perspectives of the Little Rock 9 integration event. Referring to their homework assignment based on the *Eyes on the Prize* and the chart made in reference to this event, as a Do Now, students wrote their own perspective of the incident. During this time, teachers checked with each table group to check the status of the responses. The teacher modeled how to do a document analysis. This was followed by and supported in small group work. Students were able to read a variety of documents while sourcing and evaluating bias in each document. Students were actively involved in discussions, finding evidence and stating reasons for the perspectives that were uncovered. Thus, in this class, student discussions reflected higher levels of thinking and participation.
## Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use or adopt rubrics that are loosely aligned with the school’s curricula. Teachers’ assessment practices inconsistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

## Impact

Limited feedback that is not actionable appears on many student work products thus, limiting progress. Since teachers have limited formative assessment information, there are missed opportunities to effectively meet students’ learning needs.

## Supporting Evidence

- Analysis of teachers’ written feedback to students reveals that teachers inconsistently offer actionable feedback and that, when offered, the quality of the rubric and actionable feedback varies. In one example from September, a rubric for kindergarten contains three categories worth 1 to 3 points, the teacher checking a one-point item that read “I draw 1 thing.” Also checked for one point was “I wrote a story with no words.” However, “All of my writing is on task” was worth three points. Teacher’s written feedback was, “Nice job staying on task; next time add more details to your picture.” In January, a more complicated rubric, which has four levels of proficiency, was used to score opinion writing for the same student: Novice; Apprentice; Practitioner and Expert. The piece scored in five categories as an Apprentice with some of the language written as “uses a combination of drawing, dictating and writing to compose. Has topic and attempts a focus (opinion), but focus may shift or not be relevant to the topic chosen.” The other four categories have equally as complicated criteria listed. The teacher’s feedback stated, “Great sentence, next time add labels.” In other examples for this same student, rubrics are scored for science writing, baseline writing with a more complex rubric. According to this student, he does not understand how to use a rubric and cannot read anything but the simpler one from the beginning of the year. Thus, progress is limited in moving forward.

- Actionable feedback on a grade-three informational writing piece that was scored a level 4 stated, “Glow: Your article is very organized and detailed. Grow: The next step is to put your writing into paragraphs.” A grade-two student’s narrative writing piece had a score in the level 3 range on a 0-4 rating with 5 categories. The feedback was, “Good job using many details to describe your character and his want. Next steps: Use capital letters for the beginning of sentences, use periods at the end of each sentence.” In addressing important feedback, one student shared that the development of the organization of his essay needed to be a little more concrete and exact. This feedback helped him focus on specifics and stop “brushing over” the details. Another student’s feedback was not to be afraid to go outside the box, branch out a little bit and use the “outsider’s voice.” These students agreed that, “Teachers do a wonderful job with us.” One student shared that, “I have grown. The rubric score is a grade that I learn from. It improves my writing and different perspectives.”

- Teachers articulate several methods to check for understanding during lessons. Parking Lots as places for students to use sticky notes to respond to prompts asked by teachers who then use them as a measure of comprehension and confusions to be dealt with during the next lesson. Several teachers demonstrated the mid-point assessment to check on students’ processing of information. One teacher whose class was reading the same non-fiction article had a mid-point check in. Students were asked to share their introductions of their written pieces. Several volunteered and then the teacher who was moving around the room, regrouped several students to join new groups. Some teachers track by standards to assess what is being learned and where the struggles continue. Exit slips and whiteboards are used inconsistently. Not all checks for understanding result in effective adjustments to instruction as observed and shared by staff.
Additional Finding

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

Findings

School leaders and staff consistently communicate high expectations and share information with families regarding student progress toward college and career readiness. Teacher teams and staff establish a culture for learning that consistently communicates high expectations for all students.

Impact

School leaders and staff communicate through an online grade book system and other platforms, providing frequent opportunities for families to understand their children’s progress toward meeting standards. Ongoing and detailed guidance and advisement support and prepare students for next levels.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and staff consistently communicate high expectations to families via written notices, telephone calls, a parent and student handbook, workshops, and the school website. Parents are valued and say that the school is concerned for and supportive of them and their children. The parent handbook outlines policies, procedures, expectations, and supports to students, and families. School updates and offerings are communicated to parents through Jupiter messages, available in both English and Spanish, and in some cases, as a hard copy as well. For example, parents shared that they enjoy and learn in workshops and opportunities to participate in curricular and celebratory activities with their children during Family Friday. These parent engagement activities strengthen links between school and home and promote relationships that are respectful and make an important contribution to students’ personal and academic achievements.

- Staff communicates with families through Back-to-School Night, Parent Teacher Conferences, Tuesday Parent Engagement, and regular Jupiter communication. Prior to the start of school, a kindergarten picnic is hosted so that kindergarten parents can meet one another, teachers, and other school staff and parents. In the spring, teachers from the next grade conduct a meet and greet with the incoming class for the next year. For middle school, a grade-five and -six dance welcomes the grade-five students into middle school. School staff host a high school fair each fall to showcase the various high schools available to students. This provides invaluable information to parents who would otherwise not be able to access high school tours because of work conflicts. Parents shared that the school partnered with them using workshops against bullying, offering information about developmental stages of children, and using resources like a home access reading program and math for student support at home. They also shared the benefit of the process that school leaders and guidance have for high school application by including parents right from the beginning of the process.

- **College Access for All** curriculum is taught beginning in grade seven and continues through grade eight. This program includes opportunities for students to learn about the enrollment processes, financial aid, planning ahead and the significance of high school, as well as the opportunities that college can provide. Students visit multiple college campuses and receive motivational speeches which include preparation skills. Parents and students shared that guidance and feedback are offered to guide next-level expectations. In addition, grade-seven students write an essay about the high school they would like to attend. The community is invited to share careers and their development with students. Students are aware of and prepared for their next level because of the preparation offered by school staff.
# Additional Finding

## Quality Indicator: 4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development

**Rating:** Proficient

### Findings

All teachers have common planning time built into their schedule for opportunities to engage in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations. Teacher teams regularly analyze assessment data and student work through the inquiry cycles for students they share or on whom they are focused.

### Impact

Teacher team collaborations promote school goals and the implementation of Common Core Learning Standards thus, strengthening the instructional capacity of teachers. Improved teacher practice and progress towards goals for groups of students are a result of the ongoing team assessment analysis.

### Supporting Evidence

- Common planning time exists for all teachers so they have weekly opportunities to strengthen their pedagogy and professional collaborations. Six cyclical inquiry teacher teams are organized by grade bands and content. Each cycle has a different lens of focus which is guided by using protocols such as consultancy, looking at student work and data. Each team focuses on the bottom third of their classes. The first cycle this year was focused on differentiation. Teams look at tasks and lesson plans to build on each other’s strengths to reteach and revise units of study. Teachers participated in a topic study in an area in need of improvement, according to Advance data. Topics included, among others, inclusion teaching, differentiation, questioning, student engagement, brain physiology, and vocabulary. This involved weekly team meetings to dive into an assigned topic. To support team efforts, Advance data is used to schedule teacher intervisitations and debriefs so that highly effective teachers can share best practices with those who need to see demonstrations and modeling of specific skills or routines.

- Expectations focus on using data to drive instruction thus, improving their lesson planning and student achievement. Each subject-area team generates measurable goals that are tracked and monitored collaboratively with leadership. The goals are developed in alignment with the Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP). For example, the math goal stated that all teachers from grades three through eight will collaborate in teacher teams to analyze student growth in math as evidenced by an increase of 25 percentage points of students achieving proficiency as measured by iReady Math Diagnostic from September 2018. The February midyear point was set at a 7.5 percentage point increase, which was reported by school leaders as met. This goal was purposefully identified by teachers during summer inquiry team meetings and professional development at which time data analysis led them to indicate this would align most accurately with increased student performance.

- Students set personal goals for themselves in ELA and math, which will support them in meeting school goals, during the first week of September. Diagnostic assessments are administered and target groups are created. Students conference with teachers regarding progress toward their goals, specifically four times a year for Fountas and Pinnell, three times a year for the iReady Diagnostics. In addition, there are student health portfolios and Jupiter data, which is an online platform where their grades are presented to students and their parents. As one teacher stated, “Students write their own goals on a portfolio assessment goal sheet and by doing so they have ownership of that goal.” The impact of this work has been noted by school leaders and staff that they have met their mid-point progress monitoring for the CEP goals; according to Advance ratings, collaboration among teachers has both increased and improved; and students are participating in less frontal teaching and more collaborative learning opportunities. Student goals are another measure for teacher teams to use to indicate how much progress students have obtained in targeted areas.