Quality Review Report

2018-2019

P.S. M811 - Mickey Mantle School
K-8 75M811
466 West End Avenue
Manhattan
NY 10024

Principal: John Mccormick

Dates of Review:
May 23, 2019 - May 24, 2019

Lead Reviewer: Edward Hazen
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><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></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>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>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>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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### School Culture

<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>Area of Celebration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
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### Systems for Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</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>
</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>
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<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>
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<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>
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Area of Celebration

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.4 Positive Learning Environment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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Findings

School leaders and staff maintain a positive school culture that includes partnerships with families to promote student ownership of their social-emotional and academic learning. Structures including student interest inventories are in place to ensure that student voice is valued and included in school and classroom decisions.

Impact

School staffs’ promotion of an inclusive culture welcomes student voice and supports progress toward the schoolwide goals. Support for student learning and family outreach efforts results in the adoption of effective academic and personal behaviors.

Supporting Evidence

- The school’s theory of action for building a positive school culture is grounded in the schoolwide Positive Behaviors Intervention and Supports (PBIS) program, and aligns with its core beliefs which state that “students learn best in classrooms that are structured and predictable and fosters student voice and meaningful communication to support the development of the whole child.” School leaders and staff reported that building student independence is a primary goal and schoolwide focus because it is critical to their academic and social-emotional success. To this end, school leaders and staff created a system of reinforcement for behaviors that align to the school mantra, “Be Respectful, Responsible and Safe” (RRS). Staff conspicuously displays posters in classrooms and around the school that provide specific examples of what the RRS looks like and sounds like in different settings within the school building. Daily, differentiated point sheets with corresponding behavior rubrics allow for student self-evaluation and reflection on their behaviors throughout the school day. As an incentive for displaying positive behaviors, students can earn points that align with the schoolwide token economy that allows students to shop monthly in the school store.

- To meaningfully include student input in decision-making, each classroom community creates a Classroom Charter that outlines shared expectations and classroom behavioral norms that everyone agrees to follow. Classroom Charters were observed in all classes during the classroom visitations, and all students were able to explain what RRS is and provide a specific example of how they use it as a behavioral model. Students reported providing input into what items they want to be offered in the school store, and some stated that they have one on one conversations with their teachers to determine what goals should be included in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and transition plans. Additionally, school leaders and teachers use vocational assessments, interest inventories, and student surveys to capture students’ interests, ideas, and opinions.

- The school leaders and staff partner with families to provide them with professional development and supports that results in their children adopting effective academic and personal behaviors. Parents reported that the school hosts extensive workshops for families that have been extremely helpful in reinforcing positive and effective behaviors at home. Similarly, students stated that the PBIS program and point sheet system has been effective in helping them manage their behaviors because, “We work hard to make sure we are earning all of our points.” During a classroom visit, a student who was exhibiting untoward behavior was observed taking a “time away” from the literacy circle but was able to return himself to the group once he had regained his composure so that he could earn his points for the activity. Parents with children with extreme behaviors reported that the point system and supports offered to parents by school staff has helped them manage their children’s difficult behaviors at home.
Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use common assessment data to make adjustments to curricula and pedagogy. Rubrics are created that align with the curricula across grades and subjects to provide feedback to teachers and students on their performance.

Impact

Common assessment data is used to assess students’ progress toward meeting the standards and their Individualized Education Plan (IEP) goals and to inform revisions made to the curriculum and instruction. Teachers use rubrics to provide feedback to students regarding their academic and behavioral progress; however, the feedback has not yet led to the vast majority of students taking ownership of monitoring their progress toward goals.

Supporting Evidence

- Across disciplines and grade levels, teachers use common assessments, rubrics, and student checklists that align to the grade level curricula and Common Core Learning Standards, and behavioral point sheets aligned to students’ Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP). Likewise, teachers align rubrics to grade level State assessments in English Language Arts (ELA) and math. Some students in standardized assessment classes, or those that are on track to take the State assessments in grades three through eight, stated that the use of exemplar writing samples in conjunction with writing rubrics and teacher feedback has helped improve their writing, and they feel that it is preparing them for the New York State ELA assessment. However, other students could not explain the language of the rubric nor how it could help them improve their work. A review of student work indicated that the quality of meaningful feedback they received varied across grades and classes. Likewise, students reported that the value of the feedback toward improving their writing is dependent upon the subject.

- Across grades and departments, teachers use common assessments to determine student progress toward achieving mastery of the standards, to identify trends in student achievement, and to make adjustments to curricula and pedagogy. For example, Fountas and Pinell (F&P) data is used to determine reading groups and to identify students that require intensive intervention to improve their reading, such as placement in a Reading Recovery program. Teachers of alternative assessment classes, or of students who will be taking the New York State Alternative Assessment (NYSAA), use the teacher-created P811M Student Communication Assessment, to measure students’ communication development weekly. The data is used by teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators, and related service providers to ensure that students are consistently using their preferred mode of communication and to plan next steps in communication development for individual students.

- School leaders and teachers have decided to adopt the Student Annual Needs Determination Inventory (SANDI) assessment to align assessments to the curricula and to create consistency across grades and subjects in grades three through eight. Data is used to determine targeted instruction based on identified individual skill deficits as identified in and to meet the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) goals. Similarly, teachers use Performance Items by Level (PIL) data to plan flexible instructional groups and identify entry points into lessons. To promote the school’s philosophy of providing students opportunities to work toward mastery of a skill, a portfolio system is in place which allows students to gather evidence, such as writing samples from across content areas, to place in their portfolios so that both students and teachers can monitor student growth over time.
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

There are structures in place to ensure alignment of the curricula to the Common Core and to plan rigorous academic and behavioral tasks for all learners.

Impact

The curricula reflect strategic planning for academic tasks and discourse with rigorous habits that result in coherence across subjects and grades. Teachers use data to revise curricula and plan cognitively challenging tasks to ensure college and career readiness for students with diverse learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- A review of curriculum documents across grades and subjects indicates evidence of teacher departmental teamwork to strategically integrate the Common Core and instructional shifts in English Language Arts (ELA), math, social studies, and science. Across subjects and grade levels, students are required to make claims and cite supporting evidence from multiple sources to justify their stance on an issue when writing an argumentative or persuasive essay or engaging in classroom discussions. Across the majority classes, teachers require students to utilize thinking maps to help them organize their thoughts and engage them in meaningful text-based discussions, write from sources to make arguments, and promote the adoption of academic vocabulary.

- To build coherence in planning rigorous tasks that promotes college and career readiness, school leaders and staff created a P811M Core Beliefs Lesson Plan template to support instructional planning. This results in teachers’ purposeful inclusion of the instructional foci in their lesson plans such as higher-order thinking tasks as measured by Webb’s Depth of Knowledge (DOK), Universal Design for Learning’s multiple entry points to provide access to the lesson for a variety of learners, and student engagement strategies as measured by a student engagement rubric. To foster higher levels of student discourse, teachers have identified prompts that encourage accountable talk and the inclusion of tiered vocabulary, both embedded into many of their lesson plans. For example, a review of lesson plans indicated that the majority of teachers include talking prompts and accountable talk stems to help students respectfully disagree and to build upon one another’s thoughts to maintain high levels of discourse.

- Teacher teams have created parallel standards-based or “standards” curriculum and “alternate” or alternate assessment-based curricula to ensure that the needs of students with disabilities, including NYSAA students, are met, and all learners have access to the Common Core curricula and are cognitively engaged. Teachers and content area coordinators consistently refine curriculum to ensure that rigorous tasks are included for all students, including the lowest and highest achievers and that the pacing of lessons and units of study reflect purposeful planning of instructional time to ensure accessibility for all students. For example, teachers intentionally plan sufficient wait time for students’ responses to higher order questions to ensure that students with processing disorders have an opportunity to respond. Similarly, teachers use data to plan ability-based groups for students to work within their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and that extension activities are included for the highest-achieving students. A review of meeting agendas indicates that teachers consistently analyze student work samples and assessment data, including Dynamic Learning Maps and student portfolios, to adjust lesson plans and to include individualized student or group supports such as differentiated tasks, processes or student texts and materials at students’ reading levels.
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

Teaching strategies align to the schoolwide belief of providing structured small group instruction and multiple entry points into lessons through the use of scaffolds and common instructional practices so all learners can participate in rigorous academic tasks and discussion.

Impact

Employment of scaffolds and differentiated tasks result in students’ engaging in high levels of thinking and discussion. Across classrooms, instructional practices align with the shared beliefs about how students learn best.

Supporting Evidence

- In most classrooms, teaching practices align with the school’s articulated set of beliefs about how students learn best. The schoolwide beliefs, as identified in the P811M Core Beliefs statement, is that students learn best in classrooms that are structured and predictable and they engage as active participants in rigorous tasks and meaningful communication. To support this belief, school leaders and faculty have adopted common protocols, procedures and instructional strategies such as establishing classroom norms and routines, using transition cues, and conspicuously displaying classroom and individual student’s daily schedules. Additionally, class time must provide students with ample opportunities to communicate and write productively and teachers have adopted balanced literacy as a way to support students in organizing their writing and communicating effectively. These practices are coherently implemented across grades and content areas. The balanced literacy model, in conjunction with the use of identified best practices such as flexible grouping, turn and talks, questioning techniques, scaffolding, and differentiation of tasks, was observed being utilized in most classrooms.

- Across classes, teachers were observed using strategies such as cooperative learning, peer to peer discussions, and scaffolds such as manipulatives and visual cues to promote communication and engagement in the lesson or academic task. To begin a fourth-grade math lesson, the teacher kinesthetically modeled how to identify types of lines in a polygon, parallel, intersecting, and perpendicular, by using her arms and hands to provide visual examples for students prior to them transitioning to ability-based groups to practice differentiated math tasks with their peers, also receiving one-on-one coaching from the teacher as needed. This structure was also observed in a mixed-grade math class where the teachers modeled how to identify geometric shapes prior to students transitioning to differentiated math fluency stations based on ability with the teacher and paraprofessionals providing small group instruction or one on one assistance to students who needed further support.

- In a fourth grade ELA class, students participated in a read-aloud about heroism before transitioning to ability-based cooperative learning groups where they were required to work collaboratively to complete a thought bubble to identify characteristics of a hero. This was to be accomplished using evidence from the text they had just read. The students transitioned to their cooperative groups with minimal prompting from the teacher, and most students were engaged in text-based discussions about what makes a hero. The teacher visited the groups and asked probing questions so that students had to demonstrate their understanding of the concept of the characteristics of a hero. The teacher took conference notes on students’ level of understanding to determine placement for grouping students for the latter part of the lesson.
Additional Finding

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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Findings
School leaders communicate high expectations to staff through systematic communication and professional learning opportunities, and staff provides ongoing feedback to parents on their children’s academic and social-emotional progress in school.

Impact
Systems of communication result in mutual accountability for staff to meet schoolwide expectations. Ongoing communication with families ensures that they are aware of and can support their children’s social-emotional learning and academic growth.

Supporting Evidence

- Expectations for teachers are set at the beginning of the school year through the distribution of a staff handbook entitled, Planning and Delivering Instruction that includes guidelines for curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, and professional development. Teachers are reminded of the instructional goals via weekly email and ongoing memoranda and during Professional Learning Community (PLC) sessions. Also, weekly professional learning and collaboration sessions serve as a means of communication and offer training to support staff members in meeting the identified goals. The faculty handbook and professional development plan indicate that school leaders expect teachers to differentiate their instruction to provide access for a variety of learners to become cognitively engaged. Consequently, professional learning sessions support teachers implementing Universal Designs for Learning as a model for curricula planning and revision. Teachers report that there is mutual accountability for meeting the schoolwide expectations because, “If we are given a goal or an initiative to implement by the administration, leadership systematically outlines all of the steps we both have to take to do it and the support we will receive to meet those goals.”

- School leaders and staff implement effective strategies for communicating high expectations about preparation for the secondary level and college and career, and ensure that all students meet or exceed those expectations. The school leaders host several workshops to engage parents in discussions about curricula, pedagogy, vocational training, and their children becoming college and career ready. The majority of parents noted that the school is very supportive of families who feel that they would like their children to participate in vocational training or a career education program that will teach them critical career skills. Likewise, parents also reported that they consistently receive progress reports from teachers and support staff to ensure that their children are on track to graduate and prepared to transition to high school.

- Teachers and school administration actively collaborate with parents to involve them in their children’s academic and social-emotional learning and development. A review of correspondence from the school indicates that parents are regularly invited to workshops to learn how to support their children’s progress in reading, writing, and math and how to reinforce positive behaviors at home. Parents reported that the school staff takes an active role in partnering with families to ensure they are involved in every aspect of their children’s education and that they are supported in helping their children meet their IEP goals and in the development of students’ transition plans. Some parents expressed their gratitude for the guidance and support they received from staff with preparing to transition to their children to high school.
Additional Finding

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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Findings
The vast majority of teachers analyze student data and work samples and engage in inquiry-based professional collaboration to embed rigorous tasks into lesson plans and units of study.

Impact
The Standardized and Alternative Assessment teams systematically analyze data and student work, which results in the implementation of the Common Core and instructional shifts as well as strengthening teacher instructional capacity and improved student achievement.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams use a structured protocol to review student work and analyze assessment data to make curricula and lesson plan changes that align to the schoolwide goal of improving students’ communication and interpersonal skills. The teams engage in inquiry work to examine the impact specific instructional strategies have on providing entry points into lessons to increase student engagement and achievement. Teachers make changes to units of study and lessons and implement strategies into classroom practice, then reconvene to assess which practices had the greatest impact on student learning. Strategies that are identified as effective in providing access to content for students to elevate their skills are then shared schoolwide. For instance, the common practice of having students cite textual evidence in a variety of ways is embedded into the Standardized Team’s units of study, lesson plans, and many speaking and writing tasks. Similarly, the Alternative Team uses Dynamic Learning Maps to identify multiple ways students can demonstrate the skill of citing evidence. The work of the teams results in schoolwide coherence meeting the shared vision of ensuring that the curriculum is accessed by all levels of learners.

- Teachers reported that as a result of common collaboration time, there had been a positive impact on their professional practice and student learning. They have time to share and discuss specific pedagogical strategies and practices that can improve student engagement and communication. Teachers analyze data from the P811M Communication Assessment, to increase levels of classroom discussion and positive student interactions. Teachers further noted that as teacher teams added supports for students and pushed them to use academic language and accountable talk, students responded positively and became more comfortable taking risks by speaking in front of the class, thereby strengthening their progress toward the schoolwide vision of increasing student discourse in all classrooms. This was evidenced by 57 percent of students demonstrating at least one stage of growth in functional communication on the Communication Assessment between June 2018 and February 2019.

- Teacher teams meet regularly to analyze assessment data from a variety of sources, including F & P data, end-of-module assessments, student writing samples, and formal State assessment results. School leaders and teachers also use the Developmental Writing Continuum to inform student’s individualized goals in writing and the teacher-created P811M Writing Rubric to assess specific and observable qualities in student writing samples, to track student progress, determine next steps for improvement, to create instructional groups with targeted interventions for struggling students, and to provide teacher teams with baseline data to inform changes to curricula and instruction. These practices resulted in 51 percent of students demonstrating growth by at least one stage on the writing continuum between June 2018 and February 2019.