Quality Review Report

2018-2019

Central Park East II
K-8 04M964
433 East 100 Street
Manhattan
NY 10029

Principal: Naomi Smith

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

Lead Reviewer: Elsa Kortright-Torres
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

Central Park East II serves students in grade PK 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>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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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### School Culture

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Celebration/Additional Finding</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.4</strong> Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that supports the academic and personal growth of students and adults</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
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<tr>
<th>Additional Finding</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.4</strong> Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations</td>
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### Systems for Improvement

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Focus</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>5.1</strong> 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>Proficient</td>
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<th>Additional Finding/Proficient</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.3</strong> 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>Well Developed</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.1</strong> 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>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.1</strong> 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>Proficient</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.2</strong> 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>
Area of Celebration

| Quality Indicator: | 1.4 Positive Learning Environment | Rating: | Well Developed |

Findings

The school’s approach to discipline establishes routines and responsive classroom practices. The school community strategically aligns professional development (PD), family outreach, and student learning experiences and supports.

Impact

Personalized interventions, routines, celebrations, and supports help students learn positive behaviors and result in a safe and inclusive environment where student voice is valued and supported toward achieving school goals.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders launch a new school year by having the first six weeks of school dedicated to establishing routines that will promote a community of learners. Lessons during this six-week period are based on responsive classroom practices. The school’s approach to establishing a positive school culture is to develop relationships with students and their families. Students in grades pre-kindergarten through sixth grade are greeted every morning by the teacher and with a written morning message that segues to a morning meeting. Students in grades seven and eight participate in an advisory period with fifteen students or less. Students engage in community building activities or social justice discussions during this time. For example, in one classroom, the teacher’s morning message read, “Good morning amazing activists,” followed by a summary of the day’s plans which included a new activity on book making. Teachers stated that there is a high level of trust and that the school is a child-centered environment where the importance is on developing and attending to the needs of the whole child.

- In building a responsive school culture, student voice is honored and included in school improvement efforts. For instance, students are involved in their own initial goal-setting conference with their teacher and parents. Students shared that they also initiated, guided, and led a school initiative to have a march on stopping school violence. Students stated that they have also organized extra-curricular activities such as dances and bake sales. Students also participate in mock trials such as fifth graders researching a historical figure that committed genocide. These events support academic and social emotional school goals and demonstrate an inclusive culture.

- Teachers receive PD on a regular basis on social-emotional learning. Teachers have participated in training sponsored by the Department of Education to deal with issues such as trauma, implicit bias, racial equity, and therapeutic interventions for students that require extensive interventions. In addition, the school has preventative programs such as the Peace Garden Program which guides children to integrate the body and mind and develop positive interactions with each other through programs such as “Butterfly Wings” that sensitizes students’ sense of touch while working with plants. Finally, the school conducts restorative circles, uses emotionally responsive practices, and through community organizations provides students with supports to ensure that they come to school and are provided with appropriate interventions outside of school.

- Parents also participate in academic workshops to help their children with math by recommending videos online and other tutorial programs. A parent shared and all agreed that teachers conduct meetings in the evening to help parents understand the curricula and assessments. As a result of these practices, teachers stated that students are happy at school, students feel safe, and parents are equal partners in their education. A review of the Online Occurrence Report System (OORS) shows that there has been a reduction in the number of incidents and suspensions from previous years that has resulted in a positive and safe learning environment for all students.
Findings

School leaders and faculty have a process in place to regularly evaluate the instructional core along with systems for improvement. Work is focused on ensuring structures are more purposeful and effective.

Impact

While there are periodic adjustments made to increase coherence, there are also missed opportunities to make strategic adjustments aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards to lead to more uniformity in the effectiveness of teacher teamwork and the quality of professional learning experiences.

Supporting Evidence

- To monitor decisions regarding the instructional core, school leaders and faculty explore topics as part of their Progressive, Redesign, Opportunity, Schools for Excellence (PROSE) Structured Review (SR) process. For example, the faculty determined that though the school has a way of monitoring the progress of students in reading with Fountas and Pinnell (F&P), they do not have a systematic way of monitoring the progress of students using formative assessments in math. A group of teachers decided to take on this task as part of their SR project. These teachers developed a plan to use a mathematical continuum to determine student levels and identify areas of individual needs of students after administering a beginning of the year benchmark assessment for grade one to grade six students. The plan also includes a timeline for the work with place value progressions that identifies the work to be done from May of 2018 to November of 2018.

- School leaders and faculty monitor the effectiveness of curricula by meeting in grade level bands and adjusting lessons to meet the needs of students based on F&P results, The Math Collective Conferring Continua, and summative assessment results such as New York State assessments. The school adopted a program to provide interventions for students in grades two to eight to focus on place value. Along with the Teachers College Reading and Writing Program (TCRWP), Connected Math Project Three (CMP3) and EngageNY, the school has focused on having a humanities approach so that students become proficient writers using culturally responsive mentor texts. While the school has systems in place to monitor student progress in reading and writing by having common assessment practices and rubrics aligned to the TCRWP and the Math Collective, school leaders and faculty lack systems such as observing teachers and providing actionable feedback to purposefully evaluate alignment of the instructional strategies to the curricula with a focus on building coherence between what is taught and how it is taught.

- School leaders and faculty conduct SR conferences with teachers at the beginning and end of the year. A review of documents related to the SR meetings show feedback provided to teachers on their respective projects at the end of the year. Teachers communicate their progress on the work of the SR through emails with the school leaders and informal meetings. For example, a group of teachers worked on implementing Performance-Based Assessments (PBA) and reviewed a PBA program adopted at another school. Their plan included using an established rubric and meeting with five students to see their presentation on Indigenous Americans. After asking the students questions about content and process, the teachers would plan their next steps. The final feedback in regard to this project from a school leader to the teachers acknowledges the thoughtful reflections and next steps for the school. While there are communication mediums used by teachers to inform school leaders of their plans and what types of professional learning opportunities they would need to support the work of their SR, these systems have yet to be used to purposefully evaluate and adjust the use of resources such as the effectiveness of the CMP3, SR projects done in the past such as PBA, and monitoring of current SR work to support student mastery of the Common Core Learning Standards.
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

Through teacher team inquiry work and lesson studies, along with school leaders’ work in assessing the work of those structures, curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and strategically integrate the instructional shifts. Rigorous habits and higher-order skills are emphasized in curricula and academic tasks.

Impact

Common Core alignment, classroom-based academic tasks and schoolwide projects have resulted in the promotion of college and career readiness for all students and curricular coherence across grades. Emphasis on rigorous habits and higher-order skills requires that all students demonstrate their thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and faculty carefully plan lessons and units of study by using the TCRWP, EngageNY, and other resources. Reading and writing units of study and lesson plans strategically integrate real-world applications. For example in an eighth-grade humanities unit, students learn how New York City neighborhoods relate to the themes of triumph and tragedy while studying the experiences of immigrants coming to America during the 19th through the 21st centuries. In a first-grade math unit, students learn to interpret a math story about addition and then act out “put together” and “add to” and discuss how the problems are same or different. In a seventh-grade geology unit, students learn about natural disasters and how earthquakes impact the world around us. Students learn about the types of structures to put in place to stay safe during an earthquake. These units of study reflect the school’s strategic integration of real-world applications and coherence to use research skills, the writing process, and communication to prepare students for college and careers.

- A review of curricular materials show coherence across grades and subject areas. For example, in math, teachers use the EngageNY and CMP3 to design lessons and use the Math Collective Conferring Continua to ensure that skills in math are linked across grades and follow a certain progression. In core subject areas, such as English and social studies across grades, students are empowered as writers by using writer’s notebooks and culturally responsive mentor texts. In science, units reflect an inquiry approach so that students are engaged in hands-on experiments and build on skills acquired during their worktime at centers. There are units of study that involve students exploring insects, worms and other living creatures in water and sand in the real world. The Billion Oyster Project is an example of the type of inquiry students are conducting. This project involves restoring the East River with an oyster population. Students are charged with testing the water and environmental conditions necessary for oysters to survive in the East River.

- Rigorous habits such as investigation, analyzing data, and writing using primary sources are emphasized. Scaffolds are in place to ensure that all learners, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities, demonstrate their thinking. For example, students are presented with instructional scaffolds according to their level of performance. Some scaffolds noted in the review of curricula include leveled texts, visuals, anchor charts, small group instruction, and individualized interventions. In a grade four immigration unit, students are expected to take notes using a graphic organizer with the categories “I see, I think, I wonder” to study photographs of immigrant life during the 20th century. In a grade seven math lesson, the teacher uses images and questions that are scaffolded so that students working in small groups discuss how to calculate how much of an item they need to purchase for a party based on a chart with the items, its description, and the cost.
Findings
Across classrooms, teaching practices provide supports and different ways for students to demonstrate their thinking. Additionally, student work products and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

Impact
In all classrooms, students are provided with appropriate supports so that students are engaged in challenging tasks and demonstrate higher-order thinking skills. Students were engaged in student-to-student discussions with a high degree of thinking and participation.

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, teachers use multiple entry points such as using interactive boards, student to student discussions, and writing prompts to help students write authentic stories. In a grade four Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) classroom, one teacher introduced the strategy of considering characters’ issues that students can relate to and write a realistic fiction story. The students sat on the carpet as the teacher talked about and listed problems that she had as a fourth grader such as trying to maintain friendships and dealing with siblings. The teacher used an interactive board to model her thinking and wrote down what issues she faced as a fourth grader. Students turned and talked about some issues they face. Teachers listened in on what students shared. One teacher met with a group of students to provide them with support before doing their work independently. In addition, teachers met with groups of students and provided writing prompts as needed.

- In a grade eight classroom, the students were engaged in learning about adding a voice of value to a historical record in their humanities class. The teacher posed a statistic, “42 percent of Americans support building a border wall.” Then, the teacher asked, “What is the good news?” A student responded, “The majority rules!” Students then created their own survey so that they can add people’s opinions and experiences to their informative writing pieces. Across classrooms, there are anchor charts and evidence of group work and agreements such as “Community Agreements.” In a grade four science classroom, students work with each other to create a model of a human eye. Students refer to a document entitled “Building a Vision Model Guidelines” together. The teacher circulates to provide immediate feedback to students written on post-it notes about their model and what they need to consider to make it better. Across classrooms, teachers meet with groups of students, circulate and provide support with manipulatives, charts, prompts, sentence starters, and graphic organizers. As a result, students are consistently engaged in higher-order thinking skills.

- Across classrooms, students participate in discussions and are cognitively engaged. For example, in a grade eight math classroom, the teacher poses a question, “What is exponential decay?” for students to think about and write their answer. Students engage in a whole class discussion about the difference between decay factor and the y-intercept. In a grade six ELA classroom, students are equipped with the book they are reading and post-it notes to write notes about the author’s use of repetition in the text. Students were observed writing notes on post-its and providing the author’s rationale verbally. Throughout classrooms, students’ work products such as writers and reader’s notebooks, and discussions reflect high levels of student reflection, thinking, and participation.
Findings

Across classrooms, teachers and students use rubrics that are aligned with the school’s curricula and assessment practices that consistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding.

Impact

Teachers’ use of assessments and rubrics provide actionable feedback to students. Additionally, teachers guide students toward self-assessment, continually check for understanding during lessons, and make adjustments in order to ensure all students’ needs are being met.

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, teachers use and create rubrics to provide students with actionable feedback. Rubrics for English Language Arts (ELA) are aligned to the TCRWP curriculum. For example, in a second grader’s fall essay, the student received a *glow* and a *grow*. The student received actionable feedback that outlined that the student should use dialogue, thinking, and feeling words to transition from scene to scene. In a grade three ELA writing assignment, the teacher provided feedback using a rubric and post-it notes. The teacher explained in her feedback that the student developed a captivating lead by using action and sensory details but that she should push herself to stretch out the ending by saying more about the character’s thoughts and realizations. In a grade six student work, the teacher used a checklist to provide feedback for the student about writing an informative research essay. The teacher wrote that the student had a clear topic but had to have a clearer conclusion by answering questions about why the student’s research matters and what is the point that he is trying to make.

- On a grade seven science essay, the student received feedback that she exceeded expectations in applying scientific principles and had a clear connection to the needs of her vision of improving the fresh food industry. The student was provided with the next steps of including statistical data to support her vision. On a grade seven math task, the teacher used a rubric for comparing and scaling ratios and proportions. The teacher written feedback for the student about writing an informative research essay. The teacher wrote that the student had a clear topic but had to have a clearer conclusion by answering questions about why the student’s research matters and what is the point that he is trying to make.

- Across classrooms, teachers use ongoing checks for understanding, questions, and student self-assessments to gauge student learning. In an eighth-grade classroom, the teacher asked questions to gauge prior knowledge such as “What is exponential decay?” and had students turn and talk to each other. The teacher listened to students and then had a class share out. The teacher followed up with a demonstration using a paper as she folded it in half and then again and again. Students understood by signaling with a thumbs up that the area of the paper decreased as compared to exponential growth factors. In a grade four classroom, the teacher checked for understanding by having students turn and talk about what types of conflict might a fourth grader face at school. After listening in, the teacher modeled her thinking about the conflicts she had in grade four. In a grade three ELA class, the teacher explained that characters are complex after students realized that the character changes and they could not explain why. A student responded that complex characters teach us a lesson. A discussion between the teacher and the students helped them understand why characters change. Across classrooms, student work also consisted of self-assessments by using checklists and reflecting on their work.
Additional Finding

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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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</table>

Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations that promote achievement of school goals and implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards. Distributed leadership structures are in place.

Impact

Teachers' collaborations strengthen their instructional capacity. Additionally, teacher voice is included in schoolwide systems through SR projects and collaboration.

Supporting Evidence

- The majority of teachers are engaged in teacher-team, inquiry-based collaborations as part of the school's SR Process of their PROSE plan. For example, a teacher team that was observed is working on establishing protocols to monitor the progress of students in math. Their project involves creating a schoolwide system for progress monitoring for struggling math learners and developing appropriate interventions. During the meeting, a teacher presented the findings from an interview, Place Value Progression Interview, that the teacher conducted with a struggling grade three ELL. Teachers discussed their noticing and wondering about the student's responses to questions regarding place value. The teachers discussed possible interventions. For example, they discussed that the student may have some language challenges and suggested the use of a computer-based intervention. In addition, the team discussed what types of PD the staff needs to address the needs of students that struggle with math. They discussed having PD sessions on using a research-based program to monitor student progress for kindergarten through grade two and another program that targets all grade levels to address the needs of the school to have a system to monitor students' progress in math.

- Other teams that are in place as part of the PROSE plan are the Therapeutic Crisis Intervention in Schools (TCIS), Equity and Implicit Bias, Math, Project-Based Assessment, Social Justice/Advisory in Middle School and Use of a Professional Text teams. Each team aligns with the school goals to promote the achievement of the Common Core Learning Standards and have strengthened the instructional capacity of teachers. For example, a teacher shared, and all agreed, that the PROSE plan has improved her capacity as a teacher and in the school as a colleague. Teachers shared that they are better equipped to handle situations that pertain to their area of interest. Teachers shared that they are passionate about learning and model this for their students by selecting an area that they would like to focus on and implement in their practice. A teacher shared that she was able to better handle a student that was exhibiting aggression and helped him by first identifying his triggers and then implementing appropriate strategies, including reaching out to a community resource, the Children's Aid Society. Teachers reported that they strive to become better teachers by learning and conducting research in teams and that this has made a difference in their pedagogy.

- Distributive leadership structures are in place through schoolwide initiatives such as the Steering Committee and the Structure Review Teams. For example, the Steering Committee is comprised of teachers that represent grade bands and have a leadership role in ensuring that information is shared with their colleagues. At these meetings teachers discuss conducting intervisitations, building a responsive classroom culture, and identifying gaps in pedagogical practices according to the school's beliefs of how students learn best. Teachers stated that this structure allows for teacher voice in making major decisions in the school that affect student learning such as having a way to monitor the progress of students in math and addressing traumatic events that affect academic achievement.