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

Cynthia Jenkins School serves students in grade PK through grade 5. 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](http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/tools/report/default.htm).

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>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Developing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# School Quality Ratings continued

## School Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></th>
<th><strong>Area</strong></th>
<th><strong>Rating</strong></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>Proficient</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>
<td>Proficient</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Systems for Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></th>
<th><strong>Area</strong></th>
<th><strong>Rating</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school’s instructional goals and meet student learning needs, as evidenced by meaningful student work products</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</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>Proficient</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>Area of Celebration</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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</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>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings
School leaders support teacher development with frequent classroom observation cycles and student work analysis. Prompt written feedback captures teachers’ strengths, challenges, and next steps using the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

Impact
Evaluative and non-evaluative observations result in feedback that promotes professional growth and makes clear the expectations for teacher practice as well as the supports available to them.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders conduct frequent classroom observations and provide feedback utilizing the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Each rated item includes specific, detailed evidence from the observed class to support the rating. Next steps for teaching improvements are included at the close of each observation report. School leaders use a strategic observation cycle that targets teachers based on individual needs. For example, a teacher who is teaching a different grade-level from the previous year would receive an observation later in the cycle in order to provide time for the teacher to adjust to the new grade. Additionally, school leaders and teachers conduct non-evaluative learning walks and provide feedback to individual teachers, sharing noticings, and trends throughout the school.

- Observation reports contain feedback that captures teachers’ strengths and weaknesses and is accompanied by next steps teachers should take to improve their practice and impact student success. For example, one observation report details how the teacher monitored student learning through questioning and conferencing. The school leader then went on to recommend the teacher develop differentiated learning tasks and use manipulatives to support further student growth. Next steps for this teacher included developing differentiated tasks to support student learning. Additionally, the school leader included several resources the teacher could use to implement the feedback. The observation report ended by informing the teacher when the following observation will occur to see the implementation of the next steps. During the teacher meeting, teachers came to a quick consensus that school leaders provide actionable feedback and follow-up to ensure feedback is implemented as well as offering additional support, as needed. For instance, one teacher noted that a school leader shared a template to assist her with gathering classroom data.

- A review of observation reports reveals teachers successfully implement recommended strategies and demonstrate growth. For example, a teacher went from a rating of developing to effective in the components “Designing coherent instruction” and “Using assessment in instruction” after successfully implementing feedback that included providing students with a checklist and assessing students through conferences. The teacher was also provided with a template to record student conference notes, using this data to plan future lessons. In another set of observation reports, after implementing feedback connected to providing students with higher-order thinking questions and time to discuss them, the teacher demonstrated growth in “Using questioning and discussion techniques.” Therefore, school leaders consistently provide feedback and support that promote teacher growth.
Area of Focus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>2.2 Assessment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Developing</th>
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</table>

Findings

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

Impact

Use of aligned rubrics does not yet result in teachers consistently providing actionable feedback to students regarding their achievement. Teachers’ inconsistently make effective adjustments to instruction, thereby not meeting all students’ learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- Analysis of teachers’ written feedback to students revealed that teachers inconsistently offer actionable feedback and that, when offered, the quality of actionable feedback varies. For instance, feedback issued for a grade-five writing assignment featured guidance on how to analyze text rather than simply restating textual evidence and how to organize the essay into five paragraphs. Feedback from a grade-one math assignment advised students to use math vocabulary to explain how to solve a problem. However, some feedback to students did not clearly state what next steps a student would need in order to improve. For example, feedback on a grade-five math task included reminding students to attend to precision and focus on making sense of the problem. Additional feedback observed on student work included a statement such as “reread activity five” and suggestions to multiple students that they check their spelling and punctuation. During a student meeting, one student shared that he was not clear on what punctuation he needed to correct. Additionally, there was an absence of teacher feedback to students both on work displayed on some bulletin boards and in student work portfolios.

- Teachers checked for understanding through circulating around the classroom, questioning, and conferencing. In some classrooms, the check for understanding led to an adjustment or clarified a misconception. For example, after conferencing with a student in a grade-five math class, the teacher asked the student’s partner to explain how to solve the problem. Additionally, in a grade-four English Language Arts (ELA) class, after hearing a student’s response, the teacher asked what evidence from the text could be used to support his prediction. However, there were missed opportunities to check for understanding, which led to some students not completing tasks. For instance, in a grade-four math class, the teacher circulated through the room and checked-in with students as they finished their group task. However, some students were not completing the task but waiting for further guidance or support. Additionally, in several classrooms, students would call out their answers to a question, thereby making it difficult to determine if all students understood the concept. Therefore, while checks for understanding do occur, the results are not yet consistently used to make adjustments to meet all students’ learning needs.

- In several classrooms, student self-assessment meters were posted on the walls and taped to student desks. For example, in a grade-five classroom, there was a self-assessment meter with red, yellow, and green dots, which corresponded to the level of support a student may need. However, there was no evidence of this meter being utilized. Thus, ongoing student self-assessment is not yet evident across classrooms.
### Additional Finding

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

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts, such as text-based answers and deep understanding. Curricula and academic tasks emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order thinking skills across grades and content areas.

#### Impact

Curricular decisions build coherence across grade levels and promote college and career readiness for all students. Additionally, rigorous habits and higher-order skills are emphasized and accessible for a variety of learners.

#### Supporting Evidence

- Curriculum maps, unit plans, and lesson plans reveal alignment to the Common Core Learning Standards, as well as the integration of the instructional shifts. For example, a grade-five math lesson plan includes a task in which students add and subtract with decimals using a restaurant menu to create their problems. Additionally, students are tasked with using manipulatives to determine if their answers are correct. Grade-two math lesson plans include questions that require students to demonstrate their deep understanding of numbers by representing them in different ways. For example, students are tasked with arranging three digits in any order and identifying the value of each digit, along with writing the number in expanded form and in words, as well as drawing it. Additionally, across grades three-five, students complete math journals in which they explain their understanding of the math concepts taught. Therefore, there is evidence of the mathematical instructional shifts across grades.

- Evidence of the instructional shifts in ELA is present across grades and content areas. A grade-one lesson plan includes a task in which students return to the text to support their answers about which animal matches each nose. A grade-four lesson plan consists of a task in which students use textual evidence to support their predictions. Moreover, a review of curriculum maps for all grades and courses reveals that students write informative essays about various topics and are required to use academic vocabulary and text-based evidence.

- Curricula and academic tasks emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills for all students. A grade-four integrated co-teaching (ICT) lesson plan includes a task that requires all students to solve real-world problems using multiplicative comparison and additive comparison. Groups are assigned one of three problems of increasing levels of difficulty based on each student's progress to date. Additionally, a grade-two unit plan includes tasks that require students to apply mental math strategies and use the commutative and associative properties. A kindergarten lesson plan indicates students will revise their writing by adding details to make the story more readable. Furthermore, unit and lesson plans reveal that English Language Learners are given vocabulary supports such as definitions or pictures to ensure they complete rigorous tasks.
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, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect the articulated set of beliefs that students learn best when teachers follow the workshop model which allows for the gradual release of students into work time. Teaching strategies consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula.

Impact

Students across classrooms produce meaningful work products. However, in some cases there are missed opportunities for students to deepen their thinking because of the absence of teaching strategies employing high-quality supports and extensions that would allow them to demonstrate their understanding.

Supporting Evidence

- The articulated set of beliefs about how students learn best includes teachers using a workshop model approach and small group instruction, as well as allowing students to engage in productive struggle. These practices were evident across classrooms and led to meaningful student work products. For example, in a kindergarten class, students participated in a brief mini-lesson in which the teacher modeled how to revise writing by adding details. Students were then released back to their seats to practice this skill. In a grade-four classroom, students worked in small groups to share their text-based evidence to support their predictions. One student told her group that she predicted Greg, the main character, would change his ways and donate money to a school, sharing a part of the text to substantiate her prediction. In a grade-five special education math class, students worked in small groups to determine what items they would order from a fictional menu and then calculated the bill. Student calculations included adding with decimals. Additionally, students had to calculate how much change they would receive using manipulatives.

- Teaching practices were aligned with the articulated beliefs. However, in some classrooms, there were missed opportunities to deepen student engagement. For example, in a grade-five math class, students were provided with time to underline key words in a math problem before working with their groups to collaboratively solve the problem. While in some of the groups all students engaged in problem-solving, in other groups, students either solved the problem alone or waited passively for their turns to write. In a grade-three math class, students were seated on the carpet and instructed to open their math books and follow along as the teacher guided them through the lesson. Students were asked to fill in parts of the text throughout the lesson. While students did have an opportunity to engage in a turn and talk, the majority of the lesson was teacher-directed.

- Across classrooms, students had access to various supports such as anchor charts, word walls, notes, and direct teacher support. For example, in a grade-five ICT ELA lesson, one teacher supported students who were reading a fable and identifying the theme, while the other teacher supported the remainder of the students who were identifying the theme in a different text. In a grade-four math class, students received one of three tasks to complete that varied in complexity. Additionally, students were seated in differentiated groups and instructed to complete the task together. Across all classrooms, students used various graphic organizers to support their learning, as well. For example, the study the problem, organize the facts, line up a plan, verify your plan, and examine the results (SOLVE) strategy was consistently used throughout grades.
## Additional Finding

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

High expectations aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* are consistently conveyed to staff through documents such as newsletters and a professional handbook. The school provides ongoing information to families regarding student progress towards college and career readiness.

### Impact

Ongoing communication and professional development provided by school leaders around classroom visits support teachers’ understanding and awareness of expectations for teaching and learning. Communication from school leaders and teachers through parent meetings and other strategies provides frequent opportunities for families to understand student progress towards meeting expectations.

### Supporting Evidence

- Review of the faculty handbook reveals the sharing of high expectations around instructional design and delivery, grading policies, and professional responsibilities. Examples of items covered include expectations for a productive learning environment and different strategies for monitoring assessment. School leaders also include sections on lesson planning and providing social-emotional supports for students. Additionally, the staff receives a weekly newsletter that includes important due dates and reminders as well as highlights and next steps from the learning-walks conducted by school leaders and teachers. For example, one newsletter revealed that during a learning walk there was evidence of structures for small group instruction, anchor charts, and restorative circles. The newsletter also noted that the focus for the following week’s learning-walk would be on rigor in student writing and student ownership. The staff handbook and newsletters, taken together, reveal that high expectations are consistently communicated to staff.

- School leaders have developed a system of accountability that holds all staff to high expectations. Professional development provides support for teachers to meet high expectations connected to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Included in the schoolwide professional development plan are outcomes that align with expectations that are shared with teachers. For instance, teachers engaged in professional development on creating rigorous writing tasks across all content areas. School leaders then looked for evidence of writing tasks on the next learning walk. Thus, teachers are held accountable and supported in meeting schoolwide goals and high expectations.

- Expectations connected to college and career readiness are shared with families through “sip and chats” with the principal, a parent handbook, and parent engagement Tuesdays. Included in the parent handbook are expectations for students to become life-long learners and suggestions of how parents can support their children, such as by providing time and space for homework and independent reading. Additionally, the handbook includes a list of books at each reading level to support independent reading. Parents also receive a progress report or report card six times a year and receive regular communication from their children’s teachers. During the parent meeting, all parents agreed that while the teachers use different methods of communicating, they are always kept informed about their children’s progress and next steps. One parent added that the teacher provided her with a specific reading strategy involving reading prompts to use at home with her child.
Additional Finding

<table>
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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

Teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based collaborations like grade and vertical teams that promote the achievement of school goals and implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards. Distributed leadership structures such as teacher liaisons are in place.

Impact

Teachers' collaborations strengthen their instructional capacity. Additionally, teachers have a voice in key decisions, such as professional development needs, which affect student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- The majority of teachers engage in inquiry-based professional collaborations and align their work to schoolwide goals. For example, across grades teacher teams are focused on developing instructional strategies and supports that build writing across content areas or strengthening the implementation of SOLVE. The grade-five team met to review student writing. Teachers used a protocol that guided them to identify the attributes of each piece, determine what skill the student is working on, and identify next steps for both teaching practice and the students. In this instance, feedback from the teachers included noticing the student restated the question, did not include a conclusion paragraph, and omitted an analysis of the text. In response, the team decided to modify the graphic organizer, use additional prompts and sentence starters, and have a one-on-one conference with the student. Therefore, teacher teams support schoolwide goals and strengthen the instructional capacity of teachers.

- As a result of inquiry-based collaborations, teachers have strengthened their instructional capacity in writing across all content areas, in lesson planning, and in identifying new strategies to support student learning. During the teacher meeting, all teachers agreed that collegial collaborations had strengthened their instructional practices. For example, during a vertical team meeting, a grade-five teacher shared a student math journal they were using to increase writing in math. The grades-three and four teams decided to implement the use of a journal as well.

- Teachers have a voice in key decisions that affect teacher practice and student learning. For example, teachers created a survey to assess the professional development needs of the staff. After reviewing the results, teachers facilitated targeted professional development to support the staff’s learning needs. This targeted professional development included topics such as crafting learning objectives, developing lesson plans, and using differentiated instruction. Additionally, teachers have a voice in curricular materials used to support student learning. For instance, a teacher leader team recommended that the SOLVE method of problem-solving be implemented across the school to increase coherence in math classes. Teachers on the action research team also review school-level data and make recommendations to school leaders. During a teacher meeting, teachers came to a quick consensus that they have a voice in key decisions throughout the school.