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

P.S. 049 Dorothy Bonawit Kole 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>
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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,</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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<tr>
<td>accessible for a variety of learners and aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards</td>
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<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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</tbody>
</table>
### School Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<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>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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</tbody>
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### Systems for Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<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>
<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 Focus</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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Evaluate the quality of school-level decisions, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school, with particular attention to the CCLS</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

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

Findings

The school’s approach to culture-building, discipline, and social-emotional support is informed by a theory of action that includes students will learn only in an environment in which they know they are safe, welcomed, and valued. Structures ensure that all students are known well by at least one adult who personalizes supports.

Impact

Student government and other structures allow for student voice to be meaningfully involved in school improvement efforts. Guidance and advisement structures, such as homerooms, are in place and have an impact on student academic and personal behaviors.

Supporting Evidence

- Students have an active voice and role in the development of school culture. Student government, which is comprised of student representatives from grades three through eight, led the formation of different clubs to meet the interests of the student body. During student government meetings, students review suggestions or concerns from students across the school. Students then determine which ideas they would like to address. For example, one suggestion was to form both boys’ and girls’ basketball teams, for which the student government advocated with school leaders. The student government also advocated for more field trips. A member of the student government stated, “We requested more field trips because we learn more if we can experience it.” As a result of this request, school leaders and teachers incorporated more field trips that support the curriculum.

- School leaders stated they believe students learn best in an environment in which they are safe, and all stakeholders are responsible for creating those conditions. Through a character education program, students learn about six traits—caring, responsibility, respect, fairness, trustworthiness, and citizenship—that they are expected to demonstrate throughout the day. Each month one of the characteristics is highlighted, and all students read a book and a quote aligned with the trait. Additionally, each class is paired with a younger grade and both classes participate in joint activities, known as buddy activities. Moreover, students are trained as peer mediators to help resolve student conflicts, build conflict resolution skills, and empower students. Taken together, these programs have helped create a safe, inclusive culture that supports progress towards school goals and meaningfully involves student voice.

- Homeroom teachers ensure that each student is known well by at least one adult who helps coordinate and personalizes supports connected to attendance and social-emotional learning. For example, homeroom teachers meet daily with their students and refer students for additional support to the pupil personnel team (PPT). A review of PPT minutes reveals individual action plans for students who have been referred. For example, one student will receive at-risk counseling, in addition to a reward system and verbal praise, while another student’s plan includes developing social skills to encourage positive interactions in the cafeteria. During the student meeting, all students agreed that they have an adult in the school who supports their growth and development. Additionally, during the parent meeting, one parent shared that her child has learned skills, such as counting backward, to help him focus and manage his emotions. The school also has a Club 49 that teaches students how to have positive social interactions, collaborate, and communicate effectively. As a result of these supports and a robust attendance plan that includes individual attendance meetings and home visits, the school’s attendance rate is 8 percent higher than the city’s average.
Findings

School leaders support teacher development with frequent classroom observation cycles and student data analysis. Prompt written feedback captures teachers’ strengths, challenges, and next steps using the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

Impact

Evaluative observations result in feedback that promotes professional growth. While feedback to teachers makes clear the expectations for teacher growth and the supports available to help teachers meet them, the feedback is not yet consistently aligned with goals for professional growth.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders conduct frequent classroom observations and provide feedback utilizing the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Each rated item is backed with 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 or embedded into different components. School leaders shared a strategy for observation cycle planning that consists of each school leader observing the same teacher for two consecutive cycles to see if the feedback had been implemented. School leaders also shared that they conduct non-evaluative observations and provide teachers with verbal feedback. While school leaders conduct frequent observations and encourage teachers to visit each other's classrooms, there is not yet a structure for teacher peers to support the development of each other.

- Observation reports contain feedback that captures teachers’ strengths and weaknesses and is accompanied by next steps teachers should take to improve their practice and have an impact on student success. For example, in one report the teacher is commended for grouping students according to pre-assessment data and challenging students to explain the choices they made. Next steps for this teacher include teaching students how to challenge each other's responses and asking more higher-order thinking questions. The school leader included an article to support the teacher in implementing this next step. In another observation report, next steps include designing lessons to include activities that assess the objectives and differentiation strategies. Attached to this report is a resource to support the teacher in designing coherent instruction. Thus, feedback articulates clear expectations for teacher practice and supports teacher development.

- While feedback to teachers offers actionable next steps that teachers can use toward pedagogical improvement, this feedback is not aligned with professional goals that teachers have set. Teachers collaborate with school leaders to develop their yearly goals at the initial planning conferences. During the teacher meeting, teachers shared the school leaders are supportive of teachers' goals and find professional development opportunities for teachers. However, a review of observation reports reveals that while goals are developed, there are inconsistent references to these goals in the feedback given to teachers. Therefore, school leaders provide feedback that supports teacher development, but it does not yet consistently reflect alignment to teacher goals.
Findings
School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts, such as citing textual evidence. Curricula and tasks are planned and refined using student work and data.

Impact
Curricula promote college and career readiness for all students. All students, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and student with disabilities, have access to the curricula and are cognitively engaged.

Supporting Evidence

- Curricular documents across grades and content areas reveal consistent alignment with the Common Core Learning Standards and the integration of the math instructional shifts. For example, in a grade-two math lesson plan, students were asked to apply the correct strategy for solving word problems, allowing them to demonstrate a deep understanding of place value and comparing three-digit numbers. Students are also required to explain how they solved a word problem. A grade-five lesson plan includes a task in which students choose the best strategy, such as using a number line, to round decimals to the nearest whole, tenth, and hundredth place.

- Curricular documents include evidence of the integration of the English Language Arts (ELA) instructional shifts in assignments. A grade-seven social studies lesson plan includes a task in which students support their responses to who is responsible for the genocide of the Taino Indians with text-based answers from multiple texts. A grade-eight ELA lesson plan also provides evidence of text-based answers. Students are required to cite evidence from various texts such as articles on the Salem Witch trials as well as from biographies of historical figures from that period to develop questions for a Socratic seminar and write an argumentative essay. Additionally, a review of unit and lesson plans reveals students across grades read a balance of informational and literary texts. Therefore, it is evident that the skills needed for students to be college and career ready are promoted in the curricula.

- Teachers use beginning or end-of-unit assessments and reading levels to create student groups and identify supports to ensure access for all students. Included in a grade-four lesson plan are differentiated reading passages that will be assigned to students based on their reading levels. A grade-two math lesson plan indicates that students will be assigned one of four variations of a task based on their performance throughout the chapter. A grade-four lesson plan included a color-coded mentor paragraph for ELLs to use while writing their own paragraphs. While some lesson plans include tiered support, other lesson plans included more general modifications for groups or learners, such as differentiated graphic organizers, a reduction in the number of problems required, or enhanced teacher support. The inclusion of tiered supports and other types of scaffolds ensures all students have access to rigorous tasks such as writing a persuasive letter or solving multi-step word problems.
Quality Indicator: 1.2 Pedagogy  
Rating: Proficient

Findings
Across classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect the belief that students learn best while engaged in collaborative tasks and discussion. Teaching strategies consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula.

Impact
As a result of the school’s shared beliefs, students produce meaningful work products. Additionally, the design and delivery of instruction to include scaffolds for students, including ELLs and students with disabilities, allow students to engage in appropriately challenging tasks and demonstrate higher-order thinking skills.

Supporting Evidence

- The core belief that students learn best in an environment in which they are challenged with rigorous academic tasks that require collaboration, discussion, and foster student autonomy through the use of the workshop model was evident across classrooms. For example, in a grade-one class, students engaged in mini-lesson on providing specific details in their how-to books. Throughout the mini-lesson, students engaged in turn and talks to share their understanding of how the author provided specific details. In a grade-four ELA class, students completed an authentic task of persuasive writing in which they provided evidence to support their opinions about why winter is the best or worst season. Students also participated in a mini-debate as they tried to convince their peers, who had opposing positions, to move to their point of view. Additionally, in a grade-five math class, students used a math menu to choose which math problems they would complete. One student explained to me that they choose the problems they will complete by using a math menu. He said, “We work through the menu at our own pace but if you are confident you can do the level four problems.” Thus, there is evidence of student autonomy, collaboration, and discussion.

- In a grade-seven social studies class, students collaborated in small groups to investigate the roles of different people or groups in the slaughter of the Taino Indians. Each student group represented a different person or group from that time period. Each group received an indictment and discussed a possible defense of their actions as well as who else may have been responsible for this tragedy. For example, the students who were representing the Taino Indians discussed why they could not defend themselves against the technology Christopher Columbus and his men had. A student said, “The Taino cannot be responsible for their own genocide. They did not have the same weapons.” A grade-eight ELA class prepared for a Socratic seminar on the Salem Witch Trials by crafting questions and engaging in small group discussions. For example, one student asked, “Who in your opinion is to blame for the trial?” Another student responded that the pastor was responsible because he had power in the community. This led to a third student sharing that he had not thought about the situation in this way and was changing his original opinion about who was responsible. The teacher then directed students to engage in a whole class Socratic seminar.

- Across classrooms, students with disabilities and ELLs received supports such as anchor charts, color-coded mentor texts to highlight the different parts of a paragraph, and leveled readings or tasks. For example, in a grade-four class, ELLs received a graphic organizer in both English and their native languages to provide access to the task of writing a persuasive letter. ELLs also worked in a small group as they received additional support from the teacher. In a grade-seven science class, students were given differentiated rock cycle diagrams that varied in complexity. Moreover, students were able to choose which graphic organizer they wanted to use.
### Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use rubrics that are aligned with the curricula. Teachers’ assessment practices, such as conferencing and whole group questioning, consistently reflect ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

### Impact

Teachers provide students with actionable feedback that includes “glows,” “grows,” and next steps. Additionally, teachers make effective adjustments to instruction to ensure all students’ needs are being met.

### Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, samples of student work products show teacher-written actionable feedback. Feedback to students on math tasks guides students to use strategies to check their answers and to add details to their explanations of how to solve a math problem. Other examples of written feedback to students include, “Stretch out your vague word to explain what your characters are thinking,” “The details including in the housing section would be better in the social section,” and “Elaborate on the details in your paragraph.” Additionally, evidence of the use of rubrics by teachers and students across grades was evident on hallway bulletin boards, classroom displays, and in student work portfolios.

- All students present at the student meeting agreed that the feedback given by their teachers has a direct impact on their work. A grade-eight student shared that she received feedback to focus on a character’s personality traits. She explained that she revised her writing to include actions that matched the character’s personality traits and that improved her writing. Another student shared that she received feedback to explain her evidence and to write a stronger conclusion. She said the teacher provided her with sentence starters that helped her implement the feedback. Therefore, actionable feedback across grades and subjects positively impacts student performance.

- Teachers continually check for understanding through conferences and whole-group questioning and make adjustments according to these assessments. For example, during a grade-five math class, the teacher paused the class to discuss a misunderstanding students were having when solving a problem. She reviewed possible strategies they could use to round decimals and then directed them to solve that problem with a partner, instead of individually. Across classrooms, teachers conferenced with individual students and small groups and made adjustments, as needed. For example, in a grade-seven science class, the teacher conferenced with small groups of students as they played a game about the rock cycle. In one group, a student shared that he was unsure if he lost or gained a rock as a result of erosion. In response, the teacher asked the group if anyone could explain what causes erosion and what happens to rocks. One student then explained that erosion caused rocks to become smaller, which meant the other student lost a rock in the game. Furthermore, across classrooms there were self- and peer-assessment checklists students used as tools to support their learning needs. Classrooms also include charts and flip-cards that students used to indicate their levels of understanding. For example, in a grade-two class, students were reminded to use their shapes to indicate if they understood the problem or needed assistance.
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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**Findings**

Teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based collaborations such as grade and vertical teams. Distributed structures that allow teachers to build leadership capacity are in place.

**Impact**

Teachers' collaborations have strengthened their instructional capacity and promoted the achievement of school goals. Additionally, teachers have a voice in key decisions that affect student learning.

**Supporting Evidence**

- The majority of teachers engage in inquiry-based professional collaborations and align their work to the schoolwide goals. Teachers meet weekly in professional learning communities (PLC) and identify a problem of practice. They then research strategies to implement to address the problem and review the effectiveness of those strategies. For example, the grade-one team met to discuss how to use students' reading levels to create individual goals and provide support for students at each level. One teacher shared a template and a resource that included possible supports and books for each reading level that each teacher could use. Another teacher shared that this was a useful resource and suggested that the teachers also provide a similar resource to parents. During the teacher meeting, all present agreed that teacher collaborations had strengthened their instructional capacity.

- As a result of inquiry-based collaborations, teachers have increased their instructional capacity in assessment practices, lesson planning, and identifying new strategies to support student learning. A review of teacher team minutes revealed the grade-three team identified student self-assessment as a need. The team researched different strategies and decided to implement a "stop light" self-assessment tool. As a result of this strategy, teachers noticed that students were able to accurately assess their learning needs. Teachers then provided additional support for small groups of students based on this. Additionally, the grade-three team presented their findings at a professional learning session for staff. The teams in grades six-eight decided to try a similar strategy in their classes, as well. During middle school team meetings, teachers chose to add a component that included students explaining why they are at a certain level.

- Teachers have a voice in key decisions that affect teacher practice and student learning. The grade-one teacher team recommended changing the structure of first grade to remain with the same teacher all day, rather than a departmental model. Teachers presented the reasons students would benefit from this model to school leaders, and the adjustment was made. After researching the benefits of cursive writing, the grade-four teachers recommended it be added to their curriculum. Additionally, after attending professional development, teachers facilitate professional learning sessions for each other, on topics such as the Next Generation Standards.