Quality Review Report
2018-2019

P.S. 65 - The Raymond York Elementary School
Elementary 27Q065
103-22 99 Street
Queens
NY 11417

Principal: Rafael Morales

Dates of Review:
March 7, 2019 - March 8, 2019

Lead Reviewer: Luz Cortazzo
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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Ensure engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula in all subjects, accessible for a variety of learners and aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards</td>
<td>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>Well Developed</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>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## School Culture

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

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

## Systems for Improvement

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Additional Finding, Well Developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school’s instructional goals and meet student learning needs, as evidenced by meaningful student work products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Additional Finding, Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Additional Finding, Well Developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Area of Celebration, Well Developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>Additional Finding, Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

| Quality Indicator: | 4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development | Rating: | Well Developed |

Findings

The vast majority of teachers are engaged in structured professional collaborations in which they take ownership and provide leadership. The Cycles of Learning protocol is utilized to guide the inquiry process.

Impact

Due to schoolwide curricula coherence and teacher leadership decisions, there has been an increase in achievement for all learners..

Supporting Evidence

- The instructional cabinet, which is composed of administrators, teacher team leaders, teacher coaches, and partners meet regularly. They look at data, problem solve and make key decisions to address the instructional needs of the school. The school utilizes Google Docs, an online platform, where teachers and administrators share comments regarding data analysis and teacher observations. This allows for the monitoring of teacher goals, school goals, and progress towards these goals. Teachers engage in cycles of learning within their teacher teams. The Grade three through five reading team, using the Cycles of Learning protocol, analyzed pre- and post-assessments from the last unit to measure student growth. Teachers reviewed implementation and data, discussed what was learned and decided on the next steps for the second cycle. As a team, they decided to bring samples of running records to their next meeting and track the reading behaviors the students exhibited during the administration of the running record. An outcome of their work was the decision to create success criterion aligned to specific, exhibited student behaviors to help them meet one-year of growth. Additionally, they decided to collaborate with the teacher writing team to develop success criteria that reflect how a student transfers their thinking from what they read to their writing.

- Teacher teams engage in cycles of learning looking at student work and student data to implement change theories directly aligned to schoolwide goals. These changes are implemented, reviewed, and assessed for effectiveness during and after each cycle. Changes are made, if necessary, for future cycles and student work and data is once again reviewed. A review of benchmark data from November 2018 through January 2019 reveals that reading performance increased 19.73 percent for all students scoring at or above grade level on the Teachers College Running Records.

- Teachers play a vital role in school level decision making. Teachers lead both grade level and vertical teams. The team leader collaborates with other team members to set the agenda, find additional resources and assign next steps. Teachers are given the opportunity to provide input regarding instructional initiatives and work with administration to decide on the focus for the various inquiry teams. During the interview, teachers explained they wanted more focus on early foundations of reading and more inferential writing from their students. As such, our school leaders focus on our instructional focus, which centers on writing about reading.
Area of Focus

| Quality Indicator: | 1.4 Positive Learning Environment | Rating: | Proficient |

Findings

There is a strategic approach to culture building and social-emotional learning. Structures for the coordination of the Yale Ruler approach, professional development, family outreach, and student learning experiences are in place.

Impact

The learning environment supports an inclusive culture where student voice is welcomed and valued. Although students are known well, personalized attendance supports that impact all students’ academic and personal behaviors are not as yet being implemented.

Supporting Evidence

- The Yale Ruler approach, adopted for all students, supports a safe environment and helps develop an inclusive culture. Students have a voice in grade wide charitable endeavors in which they raise awareness about grade specific charities. However, as yet students are not actively involved in decision-making to initiate, guide, and lead school improvement efforts.

- Students overwhelmingly agree they are treated with respect by all members of their learning community, including school leadership, teachers, and their peers. Similarly, several students expressed that they treat each other with respect. All students are proud of their school and spoke about celebrating diversity by hosting a Culture Day. On this day, the students are welcomed to wear their ethnic dress to represent their cultural heritage and the school’s cafeteria is decorated with the flags of their countries. The students believe this event brings the students together and have an opportunity to be unified and celebrate all the benefits and richness from being a diverse school.

- Staff receives professional development in the summer and regularly during the school year, aligned with the instructional focus, which targets maintaining a culture of trust and respect. Staff volunteered to attend a two-day summer training to understand the Yale Ruler approach and how to seamlessly embed this structure into the school community and their daily lesson planning. Additionally, a school charter and class charters were created to express how everyone should be treated. Staff is encouraged to try new pedagogical approaches in their classroom to promote students’ academic and personal behaviors. For example, mood meters are used in classes by staff and students to assist with their self-awareness.

- Structures and expectations for staff, beyond the instruction of academic content, are in place to ensure that social emotional learning is developed and maintained. This promotes each child being known well. Staff coordinates social emotional learning through the Yale Ruler approach, child/youth development, and guidance supports which align with student learning needs. However, structures to personalize attendance supports that impact students’ academic and personal behaviors are not yet being implemented.
Findings
Strategic integration of instructional shifts with a focus on non-fiction texts and alignment of all curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards are reflected across grades and subject areas. Curricula and tasks are planned and refined using data for all students.

Impact
The school curricula promote coherency and college and career readiness. Tasks are planned to ensure all students have access and are cognitively engaged.

Supporting Evidence
- The school uses the Teachers College curriculum for English Language Arts (ELA). GO Math!, Contexts for Learning Mathematics, and EngageNY are combined for math. There are clearly defined criteria regarding the enduring understandings and key skills each learner much demonstrates to exit a grade. These goals promote success at the next level and address college and career readiness. The school’s curricula, which infuses non-fiction as one method for incorporating the instructional shifts has been strategically utilized, revised, and supplemented for all grades. Language acquisition, fluency, phonemic awareness, and reading comprehension with an emphasis on inferential thinking are the instructional focus for this academic year.

- Inquiry-based planning is reflected in math and science across grades. The key instructional shifts related to real-world applications and using evidence to explain ideas and support opinions are stressed. In a grade one science plan the learning target asked students to design an evidenced based account of how an object made of a small set of pieces can be disassembled and made into a new object. The overarching rationale for the lesson and the unit was to explore properties of solid matter. The procedure incorporated hands-on activities such as creating a design of a model of a strong structure using a variety of materials like toothpicks, marshmallows, or play-dough to make three dimensional shapes. In a grade two math class, the learning objective required students to use concrete models to measure the length of objects in centimeters using a variety of mathematical strategies to solve the problem as well as prove why one strategy was more efficient over another.

- The vast majority of lesson plans reflect modified tasks for individuals and groups of students in each subject based on assessment data. In a first-grade math lesson, interim assessment data was used to group students by ability level. In a plan that addressed the learning of symbols greater than, less than, and equal as a way to compare quantities and numerals gave evidence of learning groups that were developed based on pre-unit assessment data. Each group was provided a different activity such as “Greater than-Less than Uno Game” for at risk students, Place value game “Roll It, Make It, Built It” for those on grade-level and for higher achievers, “What the Number is…10 more 10 less.” In a grade four math lesson, the task required students to recognize, identify, and draw lines of symmetry for two-dimensional figures. Academic tasks exposed students to the same content but provided modifications for at risk, high achievers, students with disabilities, and English Language Learners (ELLs) for individual language support.
Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teaching practices consistently reflect and support schoolwide beliefs and strategically reflect leveled entry points for student engagement, including questioning and scaffolds, for all learners.

Impact

Discussions at the team and school level have led to the development of appropriately challenging tasks promoting student engagement. Higher-order thinking skills are evidenced in the vast majority of student work products and peer discussions demonstrate high-level thinking by all learners.

Supporting Evidence

- Structures allow for student centered learning and small group instruction. Scaffolds are provided as needed to assist in completion of challenging tasks. In an integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) math classroom, students were strategically grouped based upon data from a pre-assessment of the unit and the prior day’s check for understanding. This permitted the teachers to work with a group in order to close the instructional gap. In one kindergarten classroom, students participated in a shared reading of a familiar poem, using letters and sounds to help them read tricky and unknown words. In a first-grade literacy classroom, students investigated ways to make their reading sound great, while the teacher posed questions that encouraged them to think further about the objective. Questions included, “How do readers make their reading sound really great? What does this reader do that I can try, too?”

- Teaching strategies to support students with disabilities and ELLs were in evidence. Students used context clues and graphic organizers along with sentence starters when working on ELA tasks. Supports, such as, manipulatives and visuals were provided to support all learners. In a grade two Integrated Collaborative Teaching (ICT) class, students were asked to use concrete models to measure the length of objects in centimeters. Using a variety of strategies, children worked in teams, shared their work with each other, and decided as a team to model the best strategy for the class. In a grade three-four bridge class, the English as a New Language (ENL) teacher grouped students according to language proficiency levels. The task required that students summarize a video, determine the author’s point of view, and distinguish between fact and opinion. They used the See Think Wonder protocol and engaged in a discussion, which centered on questions related to the author’s main points, their perspective of zoos, and whether they agreed or disagreed with the author.

- Manipulatives, graphic organizers, sentence frames for conversations, and technology are used to support learning and offer extensions to the curriculum. In an ENL classroom, the teacher used technology to allow students to use Quick Response (QR) code readers and iPads to access a video and answer questions related to the author’s point of view. In an upper grade class, students with disabilities practiced with short videos and then applied what was learned to reading passages to determine the point of view. ENL students answered three questions. Students then shared with a partner their understanding of the character's point of view from their independent reading.
Additional Finding

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

Findings

Schoolwide assessment practices, including Running Records are aligned to the curricula and offer a clear portrait of student mastery. Across the vast majority of classrooms teachers use a variety of checks for understanding and self-assessment including conferencing, exit slips and checklists.

Impact

Meaningful feedback to students and teachers leads to effective adjustments to meet the needs of all learners. Students are aware of their next learning steps regarding academic achievement.

Supporting Evidence

- The school uses a variety of assessments to improve student learning. Running Records are administered to all students throughout the school year to inform a student’s fluency, foundational skills, and literal and inferential comprehension. Students in grades three to five take pre- and post-assessments for each reading unit and curriculum is adjusted after looking at whole-class trends from these assessments. Teachers use the data from the pre-assessments to create small, targeted groups, and learning center activities. In writing, an on-demand writing assessment prior to teaching a unit is given to all students across the grades. It is analyzed, and teachers make adjustments to the curriculum based on the trends they notice, as well as create small learning groups. Students use rubrics, progressions, targeted writing checklists, and next steps to analyze their own work. Success criteria is used to set goals. The upper grade students assess the work of a peer and provide feedback for next steps.

- Feedback is provided to students by teachers, peers and through self-assessment. Teachers provide students with actionable and meaningful feedback regarding their academic achievement. Feedback provided to one student, included a commendation for his including his personal reflection, and provided recommendations to use post-it notes to indicate precise phrases to convey the claim. Similarly, feedback provided to a grade four student on a math task, included a commendation for her providing reasoning and proof for her strategies, which brought the student to a level three. As a next step, the recommendation was to use mathematical connections by looking for other ways to speak about the fractions. When asked about how they assess themselves and one another, one student stated, “We give feedback to each other on post-its.” Another student said, “I want to get a better grade, I know I have to include more details in my writing.”

- Across the vast majority of classrooms teachers monitor the progress of students through the use of checklists, strategic questioning, exit slips, and conferencing. Teachers’ assessment practices consistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding. Across classrooms, teachers were observed conferring with students and providing them with strategies for improvement. In a few classes, though they were in groups, some students asked the teacher to validate their answers. According to school leaders, students have begun using reading and writing learning progressions. Teachers articulate a progression of learning in a domain that provides a big picture of what is to be learned and supports instructional planning and formative assessment. Benchmark data from November 2018-January 2019 shows an increase of 23 percent for students with disabilities and 26 percent for ELLs.
Additional Finding

**Quality Indicator:** 3.4 High Expectations

**Rating:** Well Developed

**Findings**

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the entire staff through open dialogue, such as, the State of the School Address and professional learning opportunities for all staff. School leaders and staff effectively communicate expectations toward creating partnerships with families and students toward college and career readiness.

**Impact**

The effective and clear communication of expectations results in a culture of mutual accountability. The school successfully partners with families to support student progress.

**Supporting Evidence**

- School leaders communicate expectations to all staff through verbal and written structures, and a State of the School Address in which school leaders review schoolwide data trends with all staff, including schoolwide goals, district goals, and next steps to achieve these goals. Goals are monitored and shared at various points during the year, including teacher led State of the School addresses and tracked by teacher teams utilizing cycles of learning. Teachers meet with school leaders to review data by grade and discuss strategic steps necessary to ensure that expectations are met. Staff are made aware of expectations through the school’s professional development plan which outlines options for professional learning activities which best suit their needs. As a result of the actions put in place, there has been a 5 percent increase in the number of students performing at or above level on math exemplars. Evidence from TC running records indicate that no student has regressed in their reading ability.

- Throughout the school year, teachers are provided professional development in implementing the school’s expectations. The literacy and math blocks allow for a great deal of student-centered learning and small group instruction. For example, in math, students are expected to take ownership of their learning using a variety of tools of their choice when solving the Problem of the Day. In literacy, students are expected to engage with their text and skills presented during the lesson to practice strategies such as cross text synthesis. Additionally, a coach from Teachers College provides staff development in the lab site classroom, modeling reading and writing strategies. Furthermore, on-site teacher leaders often facilitate professional development aligned to teacher needs. Teachers follow-up on workshop presentations with their peers during grade conferences and hold themselves accountable for expectations across the school.

- Families receive an overview of expectations for their children to be prepared for the next grade during “Meet the Teacher” night in September. At that time, grade-specific promotional criteria are shared, as well as, classroom and curricular expectations. Parents are invited to visit classrooms in order to engage with their child and teacher through in class workshops and events. These occur during the day in which parents take part in lessons or activities across content areas. In addition, parents are made aware of student progress through progress reports that are distributed to parents in between report cards. Parent-teacher communication is fostered through emails, phone calls, ClassDojo, and grade specific monthly newsletters. These activities and methods of communication help support parents in forging a successful path for their children.