Quality Review Report

2018-2019

P.S. 81Q Jean Paul Richter
Elementary 24Q081
559 Cypress Avenue
Queens
NY 11385

Principal: Romy Diamond

Dates of Review:
December 18, 2018 - December 19, 2018

Lead Reviewer: Lisa Reiter
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. 81Q Jean Paul Richter 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.

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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</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></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></td>
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<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>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## School Quality Ratings continued

### School Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</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>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>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</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>Additional Finding</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>Area of Focus</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>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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</thead>
</table>

Findings
School leaders consistently communicate high expectations and provide training to the entire staff. School leaders and staff effectively communicate and successfully partner with families around next level readiness.

Impact
Communication and professional development around high expectations result in a culture of mutual accountability. Information sharing and communicating through verbal and written reports as well as through workshops allow families to support students in their academic progress.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders consistently message high expectations for improved teacher practice and achievement of school goals. Communication and accountability are conveyed schoolwide in the Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP), classroom observations, and professional learning experiences. Teachers receive ongoing professional learning connected to key elements of the Danielson Framework for Teaching and teacher-identified needs. The professional development committee, which includes teachers and school leaders, provided a survey to teachers to identify the learning needs of the teachers. A review of the professional development calendar reveals that two different professional learning topics are offered on Mondays such as “crafting a mini-lesson” or “defining student autonomy.” One teacher said, “We collaborate with each other and are accountable to each other. If you need help with something you can go to school leaders or colleagues.” Therefore, a culture of mutual accountability exists between school leaders and staff that results in teachers receiving training to meet schoolwide expectations.

- School leaders share high expectations with teachers via a handbook and memos. Included in the handbook are connections to the Danielson Framework for Teaching such as expectations for designing coherent instruction and how to develop a flow of the day. Additionally, teachers receive guidance on the importance of assessment practices and using data to inform student groupings, which connects to the school’s instructional focus. Teachers also request that school leaders visit their classrooms to provide additional feedback on new strategies. Additionally, teachers arrange intervisitations to learn from each other and share best practices. Thus, a culture of support and mutual accountability is evident between teachers and school leaders.

- School leaders and staff members use phone calls, in-person meetings, letters, and online platforms to communicate with families. Families receive monthly newsletters detailing the expectations for current units of studies. These newsletters include strategies and skills for parents to practice at home with their child. For example, included in a kindergarten newsletter is that students are learning how to combine numbers to make ten. Parents are encouraged to practice this skill at home. During the parent meeting, parents came to a quick consensus that school leaders and staff provide them with specific strategies to support their children. For example, one parent shared that the strategies the teacher recommended such as reading aloud and asking comprehension questions lead to an increase in her child’s reading level. Furthermore, school leaders have also set aside time each week for family tutoring. During this time, parents can meet with teachers to learn more about what students are working on and how to support them. Thus, school leaders and staff successfully partner with families to support student progress.
Area of Focus

<table>
<thead>
<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 teams that promote the 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; however, they have not yet resulted in increased student achievement for all learners. Additionally, while teachers have a voice in key decisions that affect student learning, however, there are opportunities to further build teacher leadership across grades.

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 lessons that engage students in rigorous tasks that promote critical thinking. The grade-five team met to review data from a student writing task. Before the meeting, teachers graded all student essays using a common rubric. Teachers then shared the percentage of students that performed at each level to identify skills to target across the grade. Language development and conventions were identified based on the percentage of students who performed below the standards across the entire grade. The team decided to focus on conventions. Teachers then brainstormed various strategies to use to support all students such as modifying homework assignments based on need and incorporating daily editing assignments. Teachers agreed to try the strategies and share the results at an upcoming team meeting. While there is evidence of strengthened instructional capacity for teachers, it is not yet evident that this results in increased student achievement.

- As a result of inquiry-based collaborations, teachers have strengthened their instructional capacity in lesson planning and identifying new strategies to support student learning. One teacher stated, and all present agreed, that teacher collaborations had strengthened their practices. For example, on teacher shared that she changed her lesson plan to include having students find the perimeter and area in a project on designing a video game truck. Another teacher shared that to help students expand on their writing, her team decided to incorporate drawing. A review of team minutes from different grades reveals that teachers consistently engage in professional collaborations. However, occasionally this time is used for housekeeping purposes such as setting up data binders, rather than reviewing student work and identifying high leverage strategies to use that will result in increased student achievement.

- School leaders value teacher voice in decisions that affect student learning. For example, teacher teams review curricular options and determine which programs should be purchased for their respective grades. For example, teachers in grades three through five reviewed several programs on grammar and conventions after identifying this as an area of need for their students. School leaders agreed and purchased the recommended program. Additionally, teachers turnkey professional development (PD) to the staff that aligns with school goals. For example, the physical education teacher facilitated a movement PD. Teachers also self-select grade-team leaders to facilitate their team meetings. While this structure of self-selected leaders allows for teacher voice, evidence of effective teacher leadership playing an integral role in key decisions is not yet evident across grades.
## 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 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 students 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. Across grades, teachers use a Common Core-aligned curriculum to guide their unit and lesson planning. For example, in a grade-three math lesson plan, students break apart math sentences using the distributive property, thus demonstrating a deep understanding. Additionally, included in a grade-four math lesson plan is a task in which students create word problems that include a remainder in the solution.

- **Curricular documents include evidence of the integration of the English Language Arts (ELA) instructional shifts.** A review of ELA curriculum maps across grades reveals that reading and writing skills, such as narrative and opinion writing are built upon each year. A grade-one literacy lesson includes a text-based discussion on needs and wants in which they use information learned from a close reading of the text *Goods and Services*. Included a grade-four ELA lesson plan is a task in which students use folktales to answer questions and write paragraphs in which they cite textual evidence to describe character traits or how two folktales are alike. Additionally, a review of unit 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, exit slips, and reading levels to create student groups and identify supports to ensure access for all students.** Included in a grade-three math lesson plan for a co-taught class are three different student groups that are based on the previous day’s exit ticket. A grade-four lesson plan includes a student group of ELLs that will work on a computer-based program, while the remainder of students receives texts based on their reading levels. Additionally, a grade-two lesson plan includes three versions of a graphic organizer that is provided to students based on their reading level.
Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect the articulated set of beliefs that students learn best when provided with opportunities to collaborate and work in small groups on rigorous tasks. Teaching strategies consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula.

Impact

Students across classrooms produce meaning work products. All learners, including ELLs and students with disabilities, engage in challenging tasks and demonstrate higher-order thinking skills in student work products.

Supporting Evidence

- The articulated set of beliefs on how students learn best includes teachers using a workshop model approach and small group instruction. These practices were evident across classrooms and led to meaningful student work products such as narrative and informative essays. For example, in a grade-two classroom, students worked in different stations. One group of students worked independently on an online reading program. While another group received a mini-lesson on identifying how characters are alike or different in a story, and a third group received a phonics lesson. During a grade-five math lesson, students engaged in a project-based learning task in which they were designing a video game truck. The task required students to research different games, furniture, and materials that would be needed and the total cost of those items. Students worked in small groups to design a price outline. Students also calculated the area and perimeter, as well to determine if there was space for the items. Then students discussed their reasons with their groups. For example, a student shared that he thought purchasing the less expensive furniture was a better idea because then they would have money left to purchase the other items.

- In a grade-three math class, students collaborated in small groups to investigate the distributive property. In one group, students worked with a partner and used unit cubes to model an array and then write the multiplication fact and product that corresponded with it. Another group worked on using the distributive property to break apart an array into two equations. In a grade-five classroom, students worked in small groups to annotate the song Brave, discuss responses to key questions and write an essay. One group discussed what the song was mostly about. One student shared it was about being brave and standing up for yourself and others. After the discussion, students wrote a personal narrative in which they shared a time they were brave and connected it to the song lyrics. Another group of students worked collaboratively to write an essay.

- Across classrooms, all students, students with disabilities and ELLs receive supports such as anchor charts and different graphic organizers. Additionally, teachers use grouping to provide additional support for students. For example, in a grade-two classroom, students receive one of three different graphic organizers as they engaged in a task to determine how two characters were similar and different from a story. After discussion how the characters were different the teacher said, “I’m going to ask you a tricky question now. How are the characters similar?” This question required students to make an inference. One student wrote that neither character had money at the end of the story. In grade-three co-taught classroom, students read folktales and completed a story map based on their reading levels. In one group, the teacher read the folktale aloud. While in another group, students read independently and then discussed the story. Additionally, in a grade-five math classroom, one student shared that she was using the chart in the front of the room to help her complete the task.
Additional Finding

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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>2.2 Assessment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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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 self-assessment.

Impact
Teachers provide actionable feedback that includes 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 the multiplication table to check their work, line up numbers so that you can subtract two-digit numbers from three-digit numbers, and read the problem carefully, so you have the correct place value. Other examples of written feedback to students include “Please work on adding in temporal words,” “Add more details,” and “Organize your writing and use transition words.” 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. Students also shared that teachers help them implement the feedback. One student shared that she received feedback that she did well organizing her story, but next time she needs to add more descriptive words and details. Another student shared that he needs to use more transitional words to improve his writing and planned to add those words in his next piece. Therefore, actionable feedback across grades and subjects positively impacts student performance.

- Teachers continually check for understanding through conferences, whole-group questioning, and student work and responses during the mini-lesson. For example, during a grade-four co-taught math class, the teachers circulated through the classroom conferencing with students and checking their work. Based on this, three students were placed in a small group for an additional mini-lesson. Additionally, the teachers used this information to direct students to complete the next problem or a more challenging math problem. Furthermore, across classrooms, there was evidence of self- and peer-assessment. For example, students use rubrics to provide each other with feedback and self-assess their writing. One student indicated that he could do a better job organizing the details of his essay. While his peer shared that he had a clear topic and included good details. Additionally, across classrooms, students identified their progress using a color system. In a grade-three classroom, a student explained that she is in the blue group because she really understands how to solve the problems and does not need teacher support. Therefore, it is evident that teachers’ make effective adjustments that support all students’ learning.
Additional Finding

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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</table>

Findings

School leaders support teacher development with frequent classroom observation cycles. 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 an observation cycle that targets teachers based on individual needs. Each school leader is also assigned teachers based on grade-bands. This allows school leaders to provide targeted support to groups of teachers and ensure coherence on a grade. School leaders and teachers reported that this approach allows all students on a grade to receive the same lessons, while also supporting teachers’ individual needs and styles. Additionally, school leaders conduct daily non-evaluative observations and provide verbal feedback to teachers.

- 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 students worked both cooperatively and independently. The school leader then went on to recommend the teacher ask open-ended questions that allow students to offer multiple responses. Next steps for this teacher included visiting another classroom in which this skill is prominent. In another observation report, a teacher is commended for her well-designed and challenging lesson. Next steps for this teacher included fostering more student-led discussion. During the teacher meeting, teachers came to a quick consensus that school leaders provide actionable feedback and follow-up to ensure feedback is implemented or offer additional support. For instance, one teacher noted that he received support from school leaders on using manipulatives to support all students’ access to the lesson.

- 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 “engaging students in learning” after successfully implementing feedback that included differentiating the task for students’ readiness and creating different stations that allow students to explore a concept. In another set of observation reports, after implementing feedback connected to using formative assessments such as exit slips and student checklists, the teacher demonstrated growth in “using assessment in instruction.” Therefore, school leaders consistently provide feedback and support that promotes teacher growth.