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./I.S. 087 Middle Village serves students in grade PK through grade 8. You will find information about this school, including enrollment, attendance, student demographics, and data regarding academic performance, at http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/tools/report/default.htm.

School Quality Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</thead>
<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, 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>Proficient</td>
</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>Additional Finding</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>
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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>Well Developed</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>Well Developed</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 Celebration</td>
<td>Well Developed</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>
Findings

Teacher teams systematically analyze their instructional practice through student work analysis, research of best practices and collaborative lesson planning. Distributive leadership structures, such as the CORE teams, are embedded.

Impact

Teacher teams make key instructional decisions that result in improvements in shared practice and mastery of goals for groups of students. Teachers play a leading role in making important decisions around assessments, instructional practices and curricula thus, having an impact on student learning across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- The vast majority of teachers are engaged in systematically analyzing their instructional work. All teachers are engaged in lesson study cycles which include: collecting and analyzing data from assessments, noting patterns and trends across the grade/content area, identifying and researching specific strategies that would support student needs, collaboratively planning shared lessons, conducting intervisitations to develop the instructional practice and analyzing impact of the strategy teaching on student outcomes.

- Such schoolwide systematic examination and inquiry into classroom practices result in positive student outcomes. For example, the grade-three teacher team evaluated their mathematical instructional practices that they had implemented this year. In previous meetings, they reviewed the new schoolwide emphasis on using journals for the students to quickly jot their mathematical thinking; using student work samples from their math journals, they identified that students were having difficulty using specific math vocabulary and identifying the correct operation within problem solving. They decided to implement a numberless word problems strategy as part of their instruction. In the teacher team observation, team members shared the results of the change in instruction: from the start of the unit, students who achieved mastery increased from eight percent to 71 percent mastery; all students have made growth from the baseline to the end of the unit assessment, including English Language Learners (ELLs) (from eight percent to 100 percent mastery,) and students with disabilities (from zero percent to 83 percent mastery).

- Distributive leadership practices support teachers’ work to ensure curricular alignment and key decisions on teaching practices. For example, the math committee team, comprised of teachers across grades and school administrators, conducted data analysis of student performance on the State math tests in conjunction with examining their schoolwide math instructional practices. Through their work, they collectively made decisions to: increase the number of math periods; re-institute Problem of the Day in each math lesson and unit pre- and post- tests for a more refined sense of student performance; align the middle-school math curriculum with the elementary school through GO Math! Such distributive structures enable teachers to make key decisions that affect student learning across the school as evident in four percent increase of students scoring Levels 3 or 4 in the New York State Mathematics test.
Area of Focus

| Quality Indicator: | 2.2 Assessment | Rating: | Proficient |

Findings

Across classrooms, teachers create assessments and rubrics that are aligned to the school’s curricula and to determine student growth toward goals across grades and subjects. Teachers consistently use ongoing checks for understanding such as conferencing and student self- and peer-assessments.

Impact

There are missed opportunities for students to increase mastery and ownership of their next learning steps through personalized and meaningful written feedback. Although teachers make instructional adjustments resulting from in-the-moment ongoing checks for understanding, student awareness of their next learning steps was evident in some but not the vast majority of classes.

Supporting Evidence

- Grade-level, teacher-created assessments and rubrics such as the argumentative writing evaluation rubric, grade-specific math rubric and project-specific rubrics such as the archeological dig assignment rubric are used to provide actionable feedback across content areas. While most students are given actionable feedback through these assessment practices, personalized and meaningful feedback is not evident across the vast majority of the classrooms. For example, on a grade-six student's personal narrative piece, the written teacher feedback states: “Amazing job: you do well with writing in essay format. You did great with giving details and a dialogue. Next time work on introduction and grammar.” The accompanying student reflection echoed the feedback from the teacher, but the student also shared what he would like to improve: “I want to add more dialogue. I would also like to change the story line a bit.” When interviewed, the student described wanting to get a higher score on the rubric, but was unable to articulate how to apply the teacher’s feedback to his next writing piece.

- School leaders and teachers use common assessments such as the Fountas & Pinnell reading assessments, New York City Periodic Assessments in English Language Arts (ELA) and GO Math! benchmark assessments as well as State ELA and math tests to determine student progress towards goals and adjust curriculum and instructional practices to support student learning. For example, through data analysis, school leaders and faculty noticed that students were not as successful in their short responses in math and articulating their thinking through writing thus, implemented journal writing across subject areas, particularly in math, to help students quickly jot their thinking as part of the instructional work of the lesson. All students that were interviewed articulated that they use journals every day, particularly if they are learning something new in math. Such use of assessments to adjust instruction is supporting progress towards increased mastery for all students, but is not yet fully achieved.

- Teachers use exit tickets, questioning and conferencing to check student understanding and to inform student groups and activities. Teacher assessment of student understanding is also supported by the use of student peer- and self-assessment practices as part of instruction. In an ELA lesson, grade-seven students reviewed and gave feedback to their peers on their narrative writing, discussing point of view, attention grabbers, dialogue, sentence variety, transitions and figures of speech. Noticing the quality of the peer feedback, the teacher redirected a student-to-student peer conference to focus their attention towards giving more effective and concrete feedback. Students were then heard stating, “I liked how you used back-to-back dialogue to make a really powerful introduction. You could tell the reader more about this character – you didn’t really explain what kind of character is […] use dialogue like you did here.” Such in-the-moment assessments and instructional adjustments towards student awareness of their next steps was evident in some classes but not in the vast majority of the classes.
Additional Finding

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

Curricula and academic tasks, which are planned and refined using in-class student work and assessment data, consistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher order skills across grades and subjects.

Impact

A diversity of learners has access to curricula and tasks and are cognitively engaged.

Supporting Evidence

- Across grades and content areas, curricula and academic tasks consistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher order thinking skills. Unit and lesson plans include essential questions, objectives, standards for scientific practice, academic vocabulary, differentiated tasks, student scaffolds and a variety of assessment methods. Planned strategies evident across lesson plans include tiered academic vocabulary, use of sources, narrative writing, text-based student discussions, and multi-step problem solving. For example, plans for students in the grade three and four self-contained classroom include investigating how two forces, magnetism and gravity, could act on an object at the same time using the real-world example of high-speed trains. Planned activities include using a cup-and-paperclip model to notice what can unbalance those two forces. Differentiated tasks include demonstrating their inquiry into what may cause these two forces to become unbalanced through prompts, or through pictures with labels; plans include anticipating student misconceptions around balance and embedding scientific vocabulary, both to be previewed before lessons.

- Plans for a grade-seven ELA lesson include students using the school computer lab to create movies through an online movie-maker platform to present their independent research on historical events. Plans include not only supporting research of student historical events, but also thinking through presentation aspects such as collecting primary document images, creating a movie storyboard to make sequences cohesive, adding text to their movie images to provide context and background of the image for the audience. Articulated higher order skills that the students would develop through the project include expectations for content and analysis; command of evidence; control of conventions; images; and voice.

- Using student work and data, curricula and instructional plans are refined in a way that allows access for students including ELLs and students with disabilities. For example, artifacts from the grade-two teacher team show teachers discussing student challenges around summarizing texts, and articulating an instructional strategy to support this skill. Plans for a grade-two ELA lesson include developing student summarizing skills through the use of the “Somebody … Wanted … But … So … “(SWBS) strategy to be able to retell the important parts of the story in heterogeneous parallel groups. Utilizing previous student performance on in-class quick jots and student reading levels, the lesson plan articulates individual student assignments following the mini-lesson such as differentiated story cards and graphic organizers in different colored baskets to practice the summarizing strategy on a variety of leveled text.
**Additional Finding**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.2 Pedagogy</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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**Findings**

Teaching strategies, including small-group instruction, scaffolds and differentiated tasks, offer multiple entry points for students.

**Impact**

The consistent use of scaffolds in classrooms results in students demonstrating higher-order thinking in work products coupled with high levels of thinking and participation in student discussions.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Across classrooms, teaching practices include using small-group instruction to support student access to rigorous work. During a kindergarten lesson, students classified and sorted various objects as part of their “Get it Sorted” math lesson. Students worked independently in four differentiated work stations: some students sorted color cubes and dominos; students who were more advanced in their understanding sorted a variety of buttons with different shapes, colors and number of holes on open-ended placemats; the teacher conducted small-group instruction with a select group of students through scaffolded support, such as a blue/not blue placemat for students developing their understanding in their classification work.

- Scaffolds include graphic organizers, differentiated problems and tasks. For example, grade-three students worked in three different groups based on student reading levels to determine the main idea with supporting details using differentiated picture task cards. Students discussed within their groups whether or not details supported the main idea of the task card while recording information on a graphic organizer. Grade-five students in an ELA class were supported in their peer-editing work through the narrative writing self-assessment checklist and differentiated guiding questions to evaluate peer work. Supports for ELLs included sentence starters to help them begin the compliments and suggestions as well as word choice scaffolds to show different character emotions, such as “huffed” to show annoyance or impatience rather than “said.” Such supports allowed multiple entry points into the work so that all students could engage in rigorous tasks.

- Across classrooms, student work and discussions reflected high levels of student thinking thus, producing meaningful work products. For example, students in a grade-seven science class constructed and tested a model insulator designed to slow down the transfer of thermal energy. Students debated with each other within groups on how and where the heat transfer is occurring, while they gathered data during the science period to see the efficacy of their models created out of tinfoil, rubber bands and other common materials around cans of soda. In addition, they evaluated the cost-effectiveness of their model based on the prices of their materials.
Additional Finding

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations for teaching and learning to the entire staff through venues such as schoolwide and individualized meetings that articulate expectations for high-quality teaching. All staff members communicate expectations connected to a path to college and career and partner with families.

Impact

Sustained high expectations across the school promotes shared accountability among school leaders and faculty for improving teaching and learning and contributes to strong partnerships among staff and families which support student progress towards meeting all expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders articulate high expectations for all staff through discussions at faculty conferences, memos, team and individual conversations, and a staff handbook that details expectations related to instruction, professional development (PD), and other areas of school operations. In turn, teachers collaborate with each other in teacher teams on a weekly basis to develop and share curriculum maps, units of study, lesson plans, patterns and trends from analyzing student work, and best-practice research documents. Teachers shared that this work helps build their capacity to meet high expectations for instruction, communication, and professionalism, and that there is a sense among teachers of not only holding each other accountable but also of “how can I help you be successful” in your teaching.

- School leaders meet regularly with all teachers to engage in reviews of expectations for high-quality teaching using the Danielson *Framework for Teaching,* to receive feedback on their performance in relation to best practices, and to review monthly student performance data and hone small-group instruction strategies to support student performance. Additionally, through individual and team discussions at grade, department, and common planning meetings, staff members receive comprehensive PD support linked to their needs and interests, including strategic matching of teachers for intervisitations and individualized PD calendars. School leaders further reinforce high expectations for instruction by providing all teachers with PD support in skill-building to improve their proficiency in areas such as questioning and discussion and in-class assessment practices.

- All staff communicate expectations to families through the PS/IS 87 Parent Handbook, bilingual text messages, telephone calls, emails, curriculum nights, open-house events, and online platforms such as Class Dojo. During the meeting with families, they unanimously stated that they use the online platform daily to receive updates about how their children are doing, and stated that they are regularly invited to workshops and conferences in which they learn about expectations for their children, including high school choice and college access. Parents shared examples of partnerships with school staff to support student learning, such as parents using teacher-given strategies for building graphomotor skills at home for their pre-kindergarten child, or working with the classroom teacher to identify content-appropriate books for their grade-five child who is reading at a middle-school level. Middle-school parents reported having individualized conversations with the guidance counselor, mapping out and weighing the pros and cons of high school options based on student performance and determining where they need to improve.
## Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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</table>

### Findings

School leaders and teacher peers support the development of all teachers. Through the use of strategic and frequent observations, analysis of student work and intervisitations, teachers receive feedback that accurately captures their strengths and outlines their next professional steps using the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*.

### Impact

Teachers receive feedback that articulates clear expectations for instructional practice, aligns with their professional goals and elevates instructional practice.

### Supporting Evidence

- School leaders align the first cycle of observations with content areas while the principal conducts first observations for new teachers and those new to the school. Follow-up observations are based on the need of teachers, the content area of expertise of the school leaders, or by rotation of the administrators to achieve different perspectives. The principal conducts the final cycle of observations for all teachers. These observations are supported by one-to-one small-group data conferences with teachers that focus on student performance to gauge the impact of practice on student achievement, discuss and hone strategies for small-group instruction for targeted students and support professional goal setting.

- Teacher peers support teacher development by serving as mentors, instructional coaches in math and ELA as well as using their classrooms as lab sites for intervisitations. For example, teacher peers engage in: individualized PD support through intervisitations as a lab site and as an observer to colleagues; an informal observation and debrief with a peer mentor using a school-created Danielson *Framework for Teaching* checklist; multiple meetings with the instructional coach around specific topics, next steps and specific dates for next observations. Such support from teacher peers promotes professional goals and reflection. For example, a teacher’s self-identified topics for discussion and next steps in the coaching log can be seen shifting from classroom management (room setup) at the start of the year to planning for more rigorous tasks and differentiated activities for students as the school year progressed. This was further evident within an observation report by the assistant principal.

- Teacher feedback which aligns with professional goals supports teacher growth as evidenced by a review of teacher observations. For example, a series of observations for a teacher focus on designing coherent instruction, the lowest rated domain in the first observation. Feedback from the first observation set instructional expectations and next steps including planning for “small groups to address [student] deficits based on your formative assessment. In addition, students may be assigned to differentiated activities to review for an exam.” The individualized PD plan for this teacher, linked to the professional goal of honing instructional planning, included specific dates for planning for small-group instruction with an instructional coach, intervisitations to observe a colleague, and one-to-one meeting with the principal to review student data. Subsequent observations note lesson plans that follow the mini-lesson format, strategies for small-group instruction and leveled problem sets for students as well as articulate an increase in *Advance* ratings. This pattern of alignment across feedback from observation reports, individualized PD plans and teacher professional goals is consistent through the review of observations.