Quality Review Report

2018-2019

P.S. 108 Captain Vincent G. Fowler
Elementary 27Q108
108-10 109 Avenue
Queens
NY 11420

Principal: Jennifer Iovine

Dates of Review:
January 31, 2019 - February 1, 2019

Lead Reviewer: Evelyn Terrell
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

### Instructional Core

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Ensure engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula in all subjects, accessible for a variety of learners and aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>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>Area of Focus</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>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 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>
</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>
</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 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>
</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>
</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>
</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>
</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>
</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>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Findings

The principal consistently communicates high expectations to the staff through a handbook, weekly reminders, walkthroughs, peer intervisitation, and ongoing training. School leaders effectively communicate with families via student progress reports as well as monthly newsletters, Class Dojo, the school website, and workshops.

### Impact

The staff and administration share mutual accountability for high expectations. Families receive supports to help prepare their children with college and career readiness skills.

### Supporting Evidence

- At the beginning of the school year, staff members receive a school handbook with information on the flow of the day and lesson content, making them aware of instructional and administrative expectations. The extensive handbook also includes an overview of specific instructional goals, such as using targeted mathematical strategies, including ACE (tell what you Already know, Compute, and Explain). Another expectation is for teachers to analyze and use student data to drive instruction. The administration conducts classroom walkthroughs with follow-up letters to teachers to hold them accountable for schoolwide expectations. One follow-up letter to a teacher discussed planning and preparation, student engagement, and classroom management. The principal distributes a weekly reminder to the staff, which includes the word of the week and activities scheduled for the week, such as professional development (PD).

- Teachers shared that they engage in self-initiated peer intervisitation to observe best practices for classroom management, such as a “cozy corner” where students can write about things that may be upsetting them or reflect on their day. Teachers volunteer to open up their classrooms during the reading block for colleagues to visit, and all participants receive recognition from the administration for supporting each other. A review of the PD calendar details opportunities for teachers to receive ongoing training. Targeted teachers on the grades visit schools across the city selected to share best practices (showcase schools). Teachers who attend this outside training turnkey the information from these schools to their colleagues during the extended Monday PD or lunch and learns. Some of the PD topics include, “Inspiring Great Thinkers and Doers of Math,” “ACE,” and “Growing Real Readers.” These activities foster a culture of mutual accountability.

- Parents attend Family Fun Day in their children’s classrooms, so that they are aware of instructional strategies used by the staff. Every month a different grade participates in this schoolwide partnership with families, so that parents are able to support their children at home in building college and career readiness skills. A student shared that his parent visited his class and they worked together on building the tallest tower in the class. A parent shared that she participated in story time with her child during her Family Fun Day classroom visit.

- Parents receive monthly newsletters from the school and communicate with teachers via Class Dojo, REMIND emails, and phone calls. Families receive progress reports so that they know how their children are progressing towards the skills needed for the next grade. The school’s website includes each teacher’s units of study, homework, and projects. In addition, the parent-teacher association has a dedicated page on the website. The school provides workshops aligned to the curriculum, such as one where parents received a math resource pack that included laminated cards with information on the order or operations, a fraction number line, and pictures of number models representing thousands, hundreds, tens, and ones. Thus, school leaders consistently communicate and collaborate with parents to support high expectations for their children.
Findings

Across most classroom, teachers consistently use graphic organizers and the CUBES (Circle, Underline, Box, Explain, and Solve) strategy and provide multiple entry points into the curricula to support all learners. Students engage in turn, talk partnerships, and shared group discussions.

Impact

Teaching strategies provide appropriately challenging tasks so that students demonstrate higher-order thinking skills in their work products, but high-quality support and extensions are not present. While most students participate in discussions that reflect high levels of thinking, student-to-student facilitated discussions are not always present to support ownership.

Supporting Evidence

- In a lower grade classroom, the teacher modeled how to use details on a bubble map created from a story to write complete sentences about a groundhog. The teachers reviewed how to start with a capital letter, use finger spacing, and include end punctuation. The teacher drew pictures of groundhogs next to the sentences. After the whole group mini-lesson, the students returned to their table groups with their writing folders. The teacher instructed the students to write a complete sentence for one detail that they chose from the bubble map. Students who were not yet able to write a complete sentence drew a picture. As the students began to work independently, the teacher sat with the lower group to reinforce finger spacing and the use of capitals and punctuation. While all the students were engaged in working at their independent levels, there were no extensions for students who had completed their sentences while others were still working.

- In a second-grade math lesson, the teacher modeled how to use the CUBES strategy as she enlisted the class in solving a problem in which a farmer had 42 apples in all and sells 18 red apples. The teacher instructed the students to state what information they had and what strategies they would use in order to find out how many green apples the farmer had. The students stated that the teacher should subtract 42-18. During a turn and talk, the students shared that the teacher needed to use regrouping as a strategy to solve the problem because you cannot subtract 8 from 2. The teacher used manipulatives to demonstrate how to regroup. After solving 42-18=24, the teacher distributed differentiated word problems to students in partnerships and groups of three. The students used dry erase boards and manipulatives from a tool kit on their tables to solve their leveled word problems. The students used the CUBES strategy as they circled and boxed specific words in their problems, recorded the two-digit subtraction problems they developed on dry erase boards, and then solved them. The teacher circulated to ask students to state the strategies they used to solve their problem. Thus, targeted student groupings and differentiated tasks provided multiple entry points into the lesson.

- In an upper-grade social studies class, small groups were assigned roles such as historian, geographer, sociologist, and economist. The students observed a picture of the “Landing of Henrick Hudson” on the Smartboard, through the lens assigned to their group. Students used graphic organizers to take notes on what they observed. The students participated in a partnership discussion at their tables and a share-out facilitated by the teacher with the other tables, one group at a time. The students demonstrated higher-order thinking as they discussed the picture through the lens assigned to them with the other groups. However, while the groups shared, there were missed opportunities to have the students pose their own questions and engage in student-led discussions to support participation and ownership.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator: 1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating: Well Developed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Findings

School leaders and faculty strategically integrate the instructional shifts in units of study across content areas and ensure alignment to the Common Core Learning Standards. Grade teams analyze student data and use a curriculum feedback graphic organizer to analyze lessons and adjust the reading and math curricula.

Impact

Curricula provide coherence across grades and promote college and career readiness for all students. All students have access to the curricula and tasks to support cognitive engagement, resulting in improvements in solving constructed literacy and math problems.

Supporting Evidence

- A review of unit plans reflects the use of a schoolwide format that incorporates a learning target with an accompanying Common Core standard. Unit maps also include academic vocabulary for specific subjects, focus questions for text-based evidence and informal assessments, such as exit tickets. Math units of study include a problem of the day, a fluency activity to build math skills, materials for students and teachers, and exit ticket assessments. Unit plans also list ACE as a support for math across all grades. Alignment to the instructional shifts is also supported through the Department of Education-approved Expeditionary Learning program, GO Math!, Science At A Closer Look and Passport for Social Studies. All lesson plans reflect the use of learning targets and focus questions, such as, “What strategies can you use to compare fractions with the same denominators?” Teachers’ plans also include notes to support the development of the learning targets. The alignment of standards across grades and subjects builds schoolwide coherence that supports college and career readiness skills.

- Teachers use a curriculum feedback graphic organizer to analyze literacy and math lessons with glows to highlight things working well and grows for things that can be improved. For instance, a literacy grow indicated the need to provide students with more opportunities to be successful in lessons by connecting everything from the hook all the way to independent practice. A modification for this is to create hooks and models that piggy back off one another, so that teachers can teach using the hook. An example of this is teacher modeling the use of a question as the hook in the introduction of an informational writing piece. A math grow indicated that exit tickets targeted skills only. An adjustment would be to incorporate more problem-solving in the exit tickets. A noted adjustment in a unit plan on character traits was to have a chart with character traits available for students who may need help thinking of words.

- The instructional cabinet team reviews student data and work samples for all sub-groups, including English Language Learners (ELLs), students with disabilities, general education, and advanced students. The team reviewed work samples from students in grade two and identified a need for ELLs to work on math academic vocabulary, as they were not using it in the explanations of their work. A suggested adjustment was the use of math word banks for targeted ELL students. An area of growth for students with disabilities was to use sequence words in their explanations of how they solved a math word problem. Teachers interviewed agreed that modifications for all students included following the steps in the ACE math strategy tool, completing the problem of the day, using CUBES for math, and RACE (Restate, Answer, Cite evidence Explain) for constructed literacy responses, which has increased student engagement. The use of these strategies has resulted in an increase in tasks involving constructed responses in math and literacy, as reflected in state data.
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

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers assess students’ work using rubrics, exit tickets, grows and glows, feedback strips, and a schoolwide grading policy to provide a portrait of student achievement. Teachers use common unit and chapter assessments and track students’ progress using Google Drive, benchmark assessments, and notes from individual guided reading conferences with students.

Impact

All students receive actionable feedback to support academic progress. Data analysis at the team and classroom levels informs curricula and instructional adjustments so that all students demonstrate increased achievement.

Supporting Evidence

- In kindergarten, teachers use a three-point narrative writing rubric to measure ideas and content, organization, word choice, conventions, and voice. Teachers create rubrics across content areas to assess student work. An example is the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) rubric, which measures how students demonstrate accuracy in testing, calculating, and measuring. Learning targets on a grade five computer rubric assess students’ ability to add different characters with actions, create a voice for each character, and add different transitions and motions, as well as the students’ ability to log onto the computer and choose different templates. In addition to using rubrics, students complete exit tickets sharing what they have learned during the lesson. A schoolwide grading policy aligns reading grades to Fountas and Pinnell levels for kindergarten through grade five. The use of these assessment measures provides students and teachers with meaningful feedback on students’ academic achievement.

- Numerous student work samples posted on bulletin boards across classrooms and hallways include actionable feedback. An example of a glow on a grade five writing sample stated, “Your writing exhibits a strong sense of voice through your use of figurative language.” The grow stated, “Moving forward, you may want to include an opposing perspective and justify why you are living in the best city.” Students’ completed work samples have grow and glow feedback from a peer and the teacher, as well as a self-reflection which states next steps for improvement. A Ladder of Feedback poster includes four categories, Clarity, Value, State Concerns, and Suggest. Each category has sentence prompts for students to use in providing feedback. Two examples under State Concerns are, “What if…” and “It seems to me…” These prompts help students in reflecting on their work as well as that of their peers.

- Teachers use common chapter test and unit assessments to determine their students’ progress. The data specialist provides teacher teams with an analysis of these assessments, identifying trends across and within grades. A trend across grades three through five is the need for students to work on making inferences. Teachers track individual students’ academic progress using student conference notes that capture strengths and provide next steps towards goals. Curricula adjustments, such as the use of word walls, visuals for ELLs, and the ACE instructional strategy to improve math skills, are uploaded onto Google Drive. A review of benchmark assessments for math constructed responses shows an increase for a grade three class from 1.93 in October 2018 to 2.0 in December 2018. Fountas and Pinnell benchmark data for a grade five class demonstrates that the number of students reading on and above level increased by 0.2 percent for the same timeframe.
Findings
Administrators provide feedback to teachers aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*, capturing strengths, challenges, and next steps for most. School leaders use Advance to effectively monitor observation data to inform decisions to support teachers' professional growth.

Impact
Feedback aligned to questioning, student engagement, and assessment (domain three of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*) has improved teachers' instructional practices and professional growth.

Supporting Evidence

- During post-observation conferences, teachers engage in a discussion with the administrator to highlight areas of strength in the lesson that support students' learning and areas of challenge that require additional supports for teachers to enhance their professional growth. Most observations include specific evidence of teaching strategies, such as questioning, aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*, and student tasks. A review of feedback for one teacher commended the teacher for an improvement in questioning techniques. The administrator emphasized that the teacher should “continue to create focus questions that allow for open-ended responses and discussions between students." A next step was made for the teacher to “visit another teacher to see best practices in guided reading” in order to improve questioning techniques for student discussions.

- During the post-observation conference for a math lesson, the administrator and teacher discussed the need to use manipulatives to support student engagement for struggling learners. The observation feedback suggested that the teacher observe two teachers separately during their math blocks in order to view their pedagogical practices using manipulatives with struggling learners. In general, teachers advise their supervisor when they have completed the intervisitations and the supervisor schedules a follow-up conference. Feedback provided as a next step for another teacher indicated the need to use accountable talk bubbles, with a two-week time frame for implementation. Teachers shared that they welcome feedback from the administration as it supports their use of best practices and promotes their professional growth.

- The principal uses the Advance systems to monitor and track teacher observation ratings. The information from these systems informs the decision-making to support teachers' professional growth. A review of Advance ratings indicates that the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* Domain 3 (Instruction) for questioning, student engagement, and assessment were often rated developing or effective. This led to PD around the norming of the Danielson rubric so that all teachers understood what is required to be rated highly effective in this Domain, such as student-to-student discussions and student-generated questions. Teachers also received PD in other areas, such as for the ACE math strategy, introduced this school year. The principal shared that there has been an increase in teachers receiving ratings at the effective and highly effective levels for Domain 3 on the Danielson rubric. In addition, school leaders use Advance ratings and observation feedback to help guide decisions around grade level teacher assignments for the upcoming school year. The principal conducts a mid-year and end-of-year review of the goals for the assistant principals. This collaborative review with each assistant principal informs their supervisory and administrative assignments, such as grades and teacher teams.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Findings

The vast majority of teams are engaged in inquiry-based collaborations using a schoolwide student work tuning protocol to review data and student work. Leadership structures embedded across the school, allow teachers from each grade to participate on the Instructional Cabinet team.

Impact

Teachers' collaborative inquiry strengthens schoolwide instructional coherence aligned to the instructional shifts, which supports student achievement. Teachers play an integral role in the decision-making process that affects student learning across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- All teams follow schoolwide protocols during the inquiry process. A review of minutes across the grades reflected that teachers have established norms using RESPECT (Reserve speaking for discussion time, Engage the presenter when speaking, Silence phones when speaking during meeting time, Present information in a non-challenging manner, Everyone shares, Collaborate and share your expertise, and Treat everyone professionally). The RESPECT protocol, implemented by the assigned facilitator on the team, ensures that each teacher gets time to share while analyzing samples of student work. An administrator assigned to each team supports implementation of the inquiry process. Teachers first analyze student work independently, with the goal of noticing strengths and challenges. Then, the team discusses each work sample collectively, sharing trends across the grade and next steps to support identified challenges. The grade five inquiry team minutes focused on identifying trends from the GO Math! chapter assessments. A trend noted as a challenge in chapter five was estimating quotients. Another trend noted was multistep word problems involving decimal operations. A strategy to support this was for students to complete a gallery walk in which they identified and compared strategies used for solving the same problems. As a result of these collaborations, all students improved on the State math assessment, with an overall five percent increase in proficiency in the 2017-2018 school year as compared to the 2016-2017 school year.

- The Instructional Cabinet is composed of the administration and one teacher from each grade in addition to an ENL (English as a New Language), an AIS (Academic Intervention Support), a special education, and a cluster teacher. This team meets twice a month to analyze grade trends and strategies implemented in the classroom. They also identify strengths and weaknesses specific to ELLs and students with disabilities, with recommended next steps for each group. An identified area of challenge for ELLs in grade four was understanding multistep word problems. Best practices for this subgroup included omitting irrelevant information in word problems and using visuals.

- Teachers on the Instructional Cabinet represent their colleagues and have a voice in decisions made to support students and staff. This year, a collaborative decision by this team, is implementing the ACE strategy in order to support constructed math responses. In addition to this, the team decided to implement a math problem of the day across grades. Teachers were surveyed to determine in which instructional areas they would like more PD. As a result, the administration has provided more training for teachers around questioning skills to support students’ critical thinking. Teacher-led PD sessions also include “Behavior Management,” “Growth Mindset,” and “Effective Use of Your Smartboard!” These opportunities allow teachers to play an integral role in affecting student learning by sharing best practices with their peers.