Quality Review Report

2018-2019

P.S. 112 Dutch Kills
Elementary 30Q112
25-05 37 Avenue
Queens
NY 11101

Principal: Dov Witkes

Dates of Review:
February 6, 2019 - February 7, 2019

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. 112 Dutch Kills 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>
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<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>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 ongoing assessment and grading practices, and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom levels</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</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>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</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>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Establish a coherent vision of school improvement that is reflected in a short list of focused, data-based goals that are tracked for progress and are understood and supported by the entire school community</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Observe teachers using the Danielson Framework for Teaching along with the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection</td>
<td>Area of Celebration</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>Developing</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>4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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</thead>
</table>

Findings
School leaders support teacher development with frequent evaluative and nonevaluative classroom observations. Prompt written feedback captures teachers’ strengths, challenges, and next steps using the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

Impact
Evaluative and nonevaluative 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 develop an observation schedule that allows all teachers to be observed by each administrator. Additionally, teachers receive an evaluative or nonevaluative observation every two weeks. School leaders also shared that they norm the first cycle of observations to ensure teachers received effective feedback from all evaluators. Teachers reported that this approach supports their professional growth. Additionally, school leaders review data from previous observations to determine teacher growth and inform schoolwide professional development (PD). For example, one teacher shared that she received feedback and support on developing lessons for reading workshop that directly improved her practice.

- 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 commends the teacher for providing examples of high-quality work for students to use as a model. The school leader went on to recommend the teacher further differentiate the lesson to meet the needs of all students. Included in the observation report was a suggestion to use strategic partnerships as one way to differentiate and provide all students with the needed support. In another observation report, the teacher is commended for eliciting evidence of student understanding through questioning. Next steps for this teacher included providing a purpose for independent reading that allows students to monitor their learning. 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.

- A review of observation reports reveals that teachers successfully implement recommended strategies and demonstrate growth. For example, one observation report commends the teacher for having developed a positive environment in the classroom. The school leader went on to recommend that the teacher ask open-ended questions to invite students to think and offer multiple responses. Included in the observation report was an example of questions and prompts the teacher could use, as well as a link to additional resources. In the subsequent observation report, the teacher demonstrated growth in the Danielson area of “Using questions and discussion techniques.” Therefore, school leaders consistently provide feedback and support that promotes teacher growth.
Area of Focus

Quality Indicator: 4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development
Rating: Developing

Findings

While grade-level teams meet multiple times a week for common planning, the use of a structured, inquiry-based approach is not yet evident. Teacher teams analyze assessment data and student work for students on whom they are focused.

Impact

Use of an inquiry-based approach is developing across teacher teams. Teacher team analysis of assessment data and student work has not yet resulted in improved teacher practice and progress toward goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers engage in professional collaborations such as common planning. During this time, teachers discuss student progress, review curricula, and make adjustments as needed. One teacher shared that during the grade three common planning time, they reviewed on-demand writing assessments to identify trends and used that data to inform student grouping. Though this process, vocabulary and volume were identified as areas of needs. The teacher also included that the grade three teachers reviewed the writing progressions and collaborated to develop lessons aligned to the writing progressions that would support students. While teachers attested to how the collaborations are supporting their instructional practices, teachers did not use a consistent, systemic approach such as a protocol to analyze student work. Moreover, it is unclear how these professional collaborations support the school goals and lead to overall student improvement.

- A grade five teacher team was observed in a professional collaboration in which teachers looked at student-graded rubrics from a recent student debate. Teachers also shared their noticings and identified debate language and enthusiasm as two areas of need for their classrooms. Teachers used the rubrics and the curriculum guide from the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project to create teaching points for an upcoming lesson in which they will incorporate the identified gaps. In addition, teachers created the supports needed for their upcoming lessons, such as an anchor chart that includes debate vocabulary. However, while teachers engaged in a professional collaboration, the use of a structured, inquiry-based process was not evident. Thus, it is unclear how this practice will promote the achievement of school goals and how it is leading to overall student achievement.

- Based on assessment data from both English Language Arts (ELA) and math, teachers have identified five target students on whom to focus. Grade teams meet during PD time to analyze additional assessment data from iReady to identify progress that has been made for their target students. However, it was unclear how teachers are utilizing an inquiry approach to consistently analyze assessment data for targeted student groups and how this work is leading to improved teacher practice and progress towards goals for students.
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

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts, with an emphasis on citing textual evidence and building fluency skills. Curricula and tasks are planned and refined using student work and assessment 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 and the integration of the math instructional shifts. For example, there is evidence of the shift of fluency across grades, with the inclusion of math sprints—tasks that require students to demonstrate automaticity with math facts and number representations. For instance, included in a grade two unit plan are math sprints in which students will use addition and subtraction facts, along with regrouping. Included in a grade four unit plan is a task in which students demonstrate fluency in finding equivalent fractions. Additionally, across grades, there is evidence of the shift of deep understanding with the inclusion of word problems and the requirement for students to utilize more than one strategy to solve problems. As an example, included in a grade four lesson plan are problems that require students to use multiple strategies to compare fractions and write equivalent fractions. Likewise, a grade five-unit plan includes several real-world word problems, such as using money to demonstrate a deep understanding of decimals.

- Curricular documents include tasks evidencing the integration of the ELA instructional shifts. Included in a grade three lesson plan is a task in which students cite textual evidence from their independent reading books to determine the theme. There is also evidence of the instructional shift of using academic vocabulary. As an example, included in a grade four social studies lesson plan is a vocabulary activity that includes breaking down the word collaborate into its root words. Additionally, across curricular documents, there is evidence that students read a balance of literary and informational texts. For instance, in grade four students read both historical fiction and informational texts on the American Revolution. Therefore, it is evident that the skills needed for students to be college and career ready are promoted in the curricula.

- Teachers use in-class assessments and other assessment data such as iReady and reading levels to create student groups and identify supports to ensure access for all students. For example, included in a grade four integrated co-teaching (ICT) ELA lesson plan are student groupings based on reading levels. The lesson plan also includes which teacher will provide support for students in each group. A grade three math lesson plan features different activities for students performing below-, on-, or above-level. For instance, if a student is performing below level, they will receive teacher support and an additional manipulative. Students performing on-level they will complete a specific set of problems. The lesson plan includes that student groups will be determined by reviewing students’ responses to two specific math problems. While some lesson plans included tiered supports, such as different tasks for students at different performance levels, other lesson plans included more general supports, such as reducing the number of problems or sentence starters. The inclusion of tiered supports and other types of scaffolds ensures all students have access to rigorous tasks, such as writing a literary essay in grade four or using multiple strategies to solve math problems.
Additional Finding

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

Across classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the belief that students learn best when provided with explicit teacher modeling and opportunities to practice learning, either independently or in small groups. Teaching strategies consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula.

Impact

All learners, including ELLs and students with disabilities, engage in challenging tasks and produce meaningful work products.

Supporting Evidence

- The articulated set of beliefs about how students learn best includes teachers using a workshop model approach and providing clear, concise, student-friendly teaching points. This was evident across classrooms and led to meaningful student work products. For example, in a grade three science classroom, students engaged in a hands-on learning experience to create their DNA strands. The posted teaching point, “I can create a model of my DNA to demonstrate inherited traits,” was clearly posted and represented the work students completed. Before creating their DNA models, students identified and discussed inherited traits and how to color-code them on their key. One student shared that she could roll her tongue as an example of an inherited trait while another student shared that he had detached earlobes as another example. The teacher modeled how to create their DNA strands and emphasized the importance of placing each color in the correct order. Students then began creating their strands. Thus, across classrooms teachers utilize the workshop model approach to engage all students in learning.

- During a grade three reading lesson, the teacher modeled a strategy that included identifying a character’s strengths and how the character could use those strengths to solve the conflict in the story. Students then engaged in a turn and talk to practice the strategy around a shared class text. Next, students used their independent reading books to practice this newly taught strategy. One student explained that she was looking back in her book to find examples of the character’s strengths. In a kindergarten class, students worked in small groups or independently on recognizing snap words or high-frequency words. In one group, students played word bingo, with one student acting as the caller while the others found the words. Another student worked with a puzzle to put words together. A third group was engaged in a guided reading lesson with the teacher. Consequently, it is evident that across classrooms that teaching practices reflect the school’s articulated beliefs about student learning.

- Across classrooms, students had access to various supports, such as wall charts, notes, and teacher support, to provide multiple entry points into lessons. For example, in a special education class for students in grades three through five, students were all working on completing long division problems. One group of students worked with the teacher by completing a problem and explaining to each other how they had solved the problem. Another student worked one-on-one with a paraprofessional on creating arrays to solve long division problems. Finally, the third group of students worked on an online program. Additionally, in a grade three math class, students were placed in one of three groups. One group of students worked with the teacher for additional support. The other two groups worked independently; however, one group of students had more challenging problems. Additionally, across classrooms, all students, including ELLs and students with disabilities, are provided with books and additional texts based on their reading levels. This approach ensures all students can practice the same strategies while reading different material.
# 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 and checklists aligned with the school’s curricula. Teachers’ assessment practices, such as conferencing, exit slips, and whole-group questioning, consistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

## Impact

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

## Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use rubrics to assess student work and provide actionable, written feedback to students on literary essays, math problem-solving tasks, or other culminating work. Across classrooms, samples of student work products showed such feedback. Feedback to students on math tasks guided them to the next level by including references to the math rubric that is used across the school. For example, one student received a glow that he included a math rule in his explanation of how he solved the problem. The grow was, “Use more strategies and representations to check if your answer is correct.” Other examples of written feedback to students included, “Remember to explain your evidence. This matters because…”, “I would love to see more details in your writing.” and “Add more math vocabulary to your explanation.” Additionally, evidence of the use of rubrics by teachers and students across grades was apparent on hallway bulletin boards, classroom displays, and in student work portfolios.

- All students present agreed that feedback given by their teachers has a direct impact on their work. One student said, “You want to turn your grow into a glow. I keep working at the grow because if the grow becomes a glow, I have learned something.” Another student shared she received feedback to use a different strategy on her math task. The student went on to explain that if she used another strategy, it would move her to a level four. A third student stated that she received feedback on her math task to label all parts of the pictorial representation of the problem correctly. She explained that she would try to do that on the next math task. Therefore, students receive actionable feedback across grades and content areas that positively impact their performance.

- Teachers continually check for understanding through reviewing exit tickets, student work, conferencing with students, and using whole group questioning. They make instructional adjustments based on these assessments. For example, in a grade three math class, students completed two problems on a whiteboard. The teacher asked students to hold up the whiteboards so that she could assess their understanding of solving division problems using a grouping strategy and a number line strategy. Based on these problems, the teacher assigned students to one of three groups: reteach, independent, or enrichment. During a grade two dual-language literacy lesson, after the teacher noticed several students were confused about how to identify direct quotes in Spanish, she clarified that dash lines are used to identify direct quotes in Spanish, instead of quotation marks. Furthermore, in a kindergarten ELA lesson, the teacher checked in with students by asking questions that matched the skill on which they were working. For instance, he asked one student to read a word he had just formed to assess if the student could recognize high-frequency words. Finally, in a grade three science class, the teacher instructed students to complete their exit questions because they would be used in the next lesson. Additionally, there is evidence of student self-assessment. For example, in several classrooms students were directed to use a different strategy to check their math answers. Moreover, students used checklists that aligned with their writing rubrics to self-assess their progress.
## Additional Finding

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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### Findings

High expectations aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* are consistently conveyed to staff through documents such as newsletters and a professional handbook. The school provides ongoing information to families regarding student progress towards college and career readiness.

### Impact

Ongoing communication and PD provided by school leaders support teachers’ understanding and awareness of expectations for teaching and learning. Communication from school leaders and teachers through parent meetings and other strategies provides frequent opportunities for families to understand student progress towards meeting expectations.

### Supporting Evidence

- A review of the faculty handbook and memos revealed that school leaders regularly share high expectations connected to instructional design and delivery, classroom management, and professional responsibilities. Examples of items covered include having a posted teaching point in student-friendly language, guidelines for the flow of a lesson for different content areas, and procedural expectations, such as for students’ transitioning in the hallway and special education referrals. Additionally, the staff receives a weekly calendar newsletter that includes important due dates and reminders. Staff also receive highlights and next steps from grade-level walkthroughs. For instance, one walkthrough memo highlighted the rigorous math instruction in kindergarten classrooms, with students writing a number sentence in three different ways, as well as the student-friendly teaching points visible across many classrooms. The memo also noted that student work must include written feedback. The staff handbook, memos, and various newsletters, taken together, reveal that high expectations are consistently communicated to staff.

- School leaders have developed a system of accountability that holds all staff to high expectations. PD supports teachers’ meeting high expectations connected to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. As an example, included in the school’s instructional focus is establishing clear expectations for student learning. Staff received a PD session led by school leaders on writing student-friendly teaching points to support that expectation. School leaders then conducted schoolwide walkthroughs and provided commendations and next steps specific to that expectation. Teachers shared that school leaders frequently conducted walkthroughs after a PD session to provide feedback and next steps. Additionally, teachers all agreed that they were supported in meeting expectations. Thus, teachers are held accountable and supported in meeting schoolwide goals and high expectations.

- Expectations connected to college and career readiness are shared with families through phone calls, online platforms, and emails. Parents spoke about the effectiveness of the online platform for keeping them informed. One parent added that the teacher often sends photos of her child’s work or the homework assignment. Families also attend various workshops and events at the school on topics such as math problem-solving, strategies to help children become better readers, and developing self-esteem and confidence in children. One parent stated that she had been to more events this year than in years past. Another parent spoke highly about the math problem-solving workshop and how it supported her understanding of the curriculum. Parents also receive information about student progress through parent-teacher conferences and parent engagement time on Tuesdays. Thus, families understand the high expectations for their children and the progress their children are making to meet these expectations.