Quality Review Report

2018-2019

P.S. 122 Mamie Fay
K-8 30Q122
21-21 Ditmars Boulevard
Queens
NY 11105

Principal: Anna Aprea

Dates of Review: January 17, 2019 - January 18, 2019

Lead Reviewer: Daniel Kim
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. 122 Mamie Fay 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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Ensure engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula in all subjects, accessible for a variety of learners and aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards</td>
<td>Area of Focus</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>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Align assessments to curricula, use on-going assessment and grading practices, and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom levels</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>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>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>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

All teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations through teacher teams and professional learning committees, systematically analyzing key elements of instructional practice. Embedded distributed leadership structures are in place that support and influence key decisions in schoolwide literacy and math instructional initiatives.

Impact

Teachers, through teacher teams and shared leadership opportunities to lead and facilitate professional development for colleagues, play an integral role in key decisions that affect student learning across the school, thus resulting in instructional coherence that positively impacts student achievement for all learners.

Supporting Evidence

- The vast majority of teachers are engaged in teacher inquiry that supports the school’s multi-year instructional focus of implementing the Advanced Literacy Skills Initiative, promoting coherence. Through teacher teams and the support of the literacy coach, teachers have implemented instructional strategies to elevate student thinking through daily literacy activities and accountable discussions about their work using such protocols as the Socratic Method. Across grades and content areas, students were observed holding partner conversations about math strategies including justifying opinions in writing with reasoning and evidence, an instructional shift, and weighing the pros and cons of specific topics. The impact of this work has resulted in multi-year positive growth on New York State English Language Arts (NYS ELA) performance, including growth in the percentage of students scoring at Levels 3 and 4, growth in average proficiency overall, as well as growth in proficiency for student subgroups such as students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and students who are English Language Learners (ELLs).

- Teacher teams systematically analyze key elements of instruction towards improving practice and increasing mastery of goals for students. In the teacher team observation, as part of an inquiry cycle, grade four teachers used student achievement data from the NYS ELA test and the beginning of the year performance assessments to identify patterns and trends that included student struggle to identify main ideas in reading. Using class work from focus group students, teachers met with partner teachers in other classes to discuss noticings, including the effectiveness of strategies utilized thus far, such as the restate the question, answer the question, cite text evidence, and explain (RACE) structure. Through the discussion, teachers outlined clear next steps for additional instructional methods and strategies to support student mastery, such as using main idea centers with mazes, games, sorts, and task cards. The impact of this work has been evident in student reading levels, with 88 percent of students in the grade, including students with disabilities and ELLs making progress towards grade level standards.

- Teachers make key instructional decisions that impact schoolwide student learning, and display effective leadership through inquiry teams and teacher-led and facilitated professional development (PD). For example, teachers in inquiry professional learning committees identified the need to prepare middle school students to be successful in taking Regents-level algebra classes. Teachers from kindergarten to grade eight met to unpack the Algebra for All instructional expectations and made adjustments to unit plans and curriculum maps so that there is coherence of content and mathematical vocabulary across the grades. Teachers also lead and facilitate PD for their peers, on topics such as mindfulness in instruction, Move-to-Improve classroom strategies and integrated co-teaching models.
### Findings

Curricula and academic tasks consistently emphasize higher order skills across grades and content areas and are planned and refined using student work and data such as writing assignments and lesson activities, as well as performance levels to group students according to needs.

### Impact

While planned academic tasks emphasize rigorous habits, there are missed opportunities for groups of students who are high achieving to demonstrate and extend thinking and elevate their cognitive engagement.

### Supporting Evidence

- Curricula and academic tasks consistently emphasis planning for rigorous habits and higher order skills across grades and subjects promoting college and career readiness. For example, lesson plans for a grade seven social studies class included students examining primary documents to analyze and evaluate the outcomes of the American Revolution for various groups in American society, represented by Abigail Adams, Frederick Douglass, Thomas Jefferson or three Seneca chiefs. In pairs, students were to either write a “PoemTweet” in 140 characters or less to capture the essential ideas of one of the characters using chatspeak or colloquial expressions used within tweets, or to create a “Mindmirror” using symbols, two original quotes from primary sources and two original phrases to summarize the most important aspects to suggest what the person was feeling and thinking at a specific time.

- Some planned academic tasks and curricula include tasks for advancing the thinking of those students who are already performing at a higher level. For example, planned lessons for a grade five math class included students working in homogeneous pairs or groups based on student performance on previous formative assessments. Each group was to focus on solving differentiated fractional problems posed within a Mardi Gras scenario of distributing doubloons from a float. Students were to collaborate to make sense of the problem using their understanding of fractions, and to articulate their own strategies for solving the problem using a variety of methods such as creating visual models. Specific enrichment plans for students who had already achieved mastery included problems with more difficult numbers, complex fractional relationships and additional constraints to solve the problem. However, such plans for advancing the thinking of those students already at mastery was not embedded in a coherent way across grades and subjects.

- Educators design curricula in a way that allows access for students including ELLs and students with disabilities using student work and performance on assessments such as running records, exit tickets and rubrics. For example, plans for a grade three English as a New Language (ENL) class included students working to organize their opinion essay about a character using differentiated scaffolds such as character webs, opinion organizers with supporting reasons, and sentence starters based on the identified needs and reading levels of ELLs within the class. While support for curricular access for a diversity of learners including students with disabilities and ELLs was evident, purposeful planning for meaningful extensions of learning tasks for the highest achieving students was not evident in the vast majority of plans, thus potentially hampering some students from the ability to fully demonstrate their engagement.
Additional Finding

Quality Indicator: 1.2 Pedagogy

Rating: Well Developed

Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teaching strategies such as targeted small group instruction, the use of scaffolds to support multiple entry points and student discussions, are informed by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and the instructional shifts, as well as discussions on the team and school levels, reflecting a schoolwide set of beliefs about how students learn best.

Impact

Through these practices, students produce meaningful work that reflects a high level of thinking and ownership.

Supporting Evidence

- Across the vast majority of classrooms, teaching practices include targeted small group instruction with supports for multiple entry points through the use of visual aids, differentiated tasks, and rich student discussions. Co-teachers in a grade one writing lesson supported students generating arguments for their opinion writing in two small groups while another portion of the class worked independently. Students worked with various scaffolds, including checklists with visual supports, personalized word walls and differentiated paper choices to articulate reasons why they believed a season was their favorite. In a grade two science lesson, the teacher guided students to use a sensory approach as part of their scientific exploration of four different unknown substances and to identify material properties such as color and texture. The teacher supported student inquiry through various means through the use of visual vocabulary scaffolds to add to their academic and scientific vocabulary, sentence starters around the senses to focus student attention on material properties, and conversation stick stems to guide students in their partner conversations to discern what the mysterious material might be.

- Across the vast majority of classrooms, students participate in discussions that demonstrated higher-order thinking. Grade five students in a reading lesson conducted a Socratic seminar analyzing the theme of perseverance across three different texts: *The Night of the Spadefoot Toads* by Bill Harley; a portion of differentiated-leveled supplemental text, such as Paulsen’s *Hatchet*; and a thematic non-fiction article. Students posed higher-order questions for each other within the discussion, such as whether or not students would make the same decisions as the character, and giving feedback to each other using text evidence more frequently to support one’s claim about a character. Discussions about instructional craft was noted at the team and school levels, as evident in teacher team notes focusing on supporting inferences with reasons and text evidence, revising unit and lesson plans for targeted small group instruction and exploring protocols for student discussions.

- Student work products and discussions across the vast majority of classes reflect a high level of student thinking and ownership of their learning. For example, grade three students in a math lesson self-selected strategies such as repeated subtraction, equal groups, a related multiplication fact or using a number line to solve a problem dividing by seven or eight. Students had access to multiple manipulatives of their choice, from color chips or squares, multiple/division facts tables and number lines that they independently used to explain their mathematical thinking to their partners, who in turn were then observed asking for an explanation of thinking through a different strategy. Grade seven students were observed in a social studies lesson independently using brainstorming charts from peers to help them generate ideas for mindmaps and PoemTweets to reveal the thinking of four historical figures during the American Revolution.
Findings
Teachers create and use assessments, such as rubrics and grading policies, aligned to the school’s curricula. Teachers consistently utilize in-class checks for understanding through conferences, exit tickets and student self- and peer-to-peer assessments to support student learning.

Impact
Students receive actionable teacher and peer feedback about their progress, and teachers make adjustments to meet student learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- Students receive teacher and peer feedback through teacher-created assessments and rubrics by grades and across subject areas that align with specific units of study. On a grade four persuasive essay writing task, teacher feedback consisted of a score on the rubric, as well as strengths and next steps. The grade four English Language Arts (ELA) rubric outlined expectations on specific content elements such as text-dependent questions, focus, command of evidence, and writing mechanics including introduction and conclusion, writing structure, transitions and conventions. An example of teacher feedback, in addition to scores on the rubric, stated, “Valid reasons are used to support your opinion, and a strong counter claim; Try to develop your reasons with text evidence for support.”

- Across classrooms, teachers consistently use various checks for understanding, including conferences, exit tickets and student-self reflections as part of their assessment practices, which informs in-class adjustments to meet student learning needs. During a grade eight advisory lesson, students in self-selected groups explored different ways to represent their thinking about what it means to accept others and themselves through skits, charts or other means of presentation. After conducting conferences with multiple groups, the teacher paused and redirected the class so that presentations made clear the difference between tolerating others and accepting others. The concluding exit ticket for the lesson required students to reflect on the question, “Think about a time when you have rejected someone or a group that was different from you – even if you didn’t do it on purpose; what would you say to that person now?”

- Teachers use self- and peer assessments as part of their ongoing checks for understanding. All students interviewed stated that they use rubrics across content areas not only to receive a grade and actionable next steps but to self- and peer assess as part of their work process. Grade five students in ELA reviewed and peer edited their partner’s argumentative writing piece, articulating specific areas for glows: “your reasons (1, 2, and 3) are awesome;” and grows: “try starting off with a stronger hook.” In a grade three ENL classroom, a student offered to his peer, while pointing to the table conversation scaffold, “Think about using this sentence starter, ‘for example’ because you are going to give evidence.”
Additional Finding

| Quality Indicator: 3.4 High Expectations | Rating: Well Developed |

Findings

School leaders and staff consistently communicate high expectations for teaching and learning across the school through a variety of methods and forums. All staff members effectively communicate expectations to families and partner with them to support all students in meeting college and career readiness goals.

Impact

A culture of shared accountability supports teaching and learning through PD and contributes to strong partnerships among staff and families, which leads to student progress towards meeting high expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders articulate high expectations for all staff through discussions at faculty conferences, memos, individual and team conversations, and a faculty handbook that details expectations related to instruction, PD, and areas of school operations. School leaders meet regularly with teachers individually to engage in reviews of professional growth, expectations for high quality teaching and learning and follow-up based on attended PD. 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. To expand capacity in delivering effective instruction, all teachers receive feedback on their performance in relation to best practices highlighted by the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Teachers shared that administrators give clear and detailed written feedback in identifying practices that are currently occurring in the classrooms through transcriptions of in-class dialogues and concrete examples to improve practice.

- Through individual and team discussions at grade, department, and common planning meetings, staff members receive comprehensive PD support aligned to their needs and interests, including strategic linking of teachers for intervisitations. Teacher teams collaborate to develop and share curriculum maps, units of study, lesson plan templates, data collection sheets and templates for analyzing student work through a variety of means including an online platform, which helps to build capacity to meet high expectations for instruction, communication, and professionalism by all. Interviewed teachers related that teachers hold each other mutually accountable for consistent pacing across the grade, pedagogical approaches across grades such as implementing Advanced Literacy from kindergarten to grade eight, and using consistent terminology such as claims and theses across content areas.

- Staff members communicate expectations connected to a path to college and career readiness to families through the PS 122 student and parent guide sections embedded into student journals, grading policy, bilingual text messages, phone calls, emails, kindergarten welcome events, open house nights, online platforms, and individualized personal meetings. During the meeting with families, parents shared ways they successfully partner with the school in explicit ways to support their children at home. One parent shared that her daughter has grown in her reading levels, thanks to applying the teacher suggestion to read aloud with more emotion to push student thinking around characters. Another parent shared that her child chides her at home reviewing her how-to writing, stating, “We need to add more details in there, mom!” Middle school families appreciated the one-on-one advisement to discuss their child’s current academic performance and options for specialized or zoned high schools in preparation for the high school application process.
**Additional Finding**

| Quality Indicator:  | 4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision | Rating: Well Developed |

**Findings**

School leaders and faculty support the development of all teachers through strategic cycles of observations according to grade bands and instructional expertise. Teachers receive feedback that accurately captures their strengths, challenges and outlines next steps using the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*.

**Impact**

Teachers receive feedback that articulates clear expectations for their practice, supports teacher development and aligns with teacher professional goals.

**Supporting Evidence**

- School leaders conduct strategic and frequent cycles of support and observations, which serve as the basis for teacher peers to support each other to build instructional practices. School leaders align observations in the first cycle for all teachers around grade bands, with supervisory responsibilities strategically aligned to the administrator’s instructional expertise. For example, the assistant principal with a high school social studies instructional background supports the middle school to set high expectations for content and rigor. Teachers stated that they appreciate the feedback knowing that their assistant principal had taught their level and that experience informs their detailed support. Observation reports specifically articulate student work products through direct student quotes and discussion transcripts, as aligned to the schoolwide instructional focus on enriching discussions to elevate student thinking. Based on observation feedback, teacher peers support the development of their colleagues by conducting teacher-led intervisitations according to content areas. Artifacts gathered from intervisitations include teacher reflections on how to hone scaffolds for literary essays and refine discussion techniques in mathematics.

- Observation feedback supports teacher growth as evidenced by review of observation reports. For example, written feedback on an observation report articulated the strength of creating opportunities for students to make mathematical connections between factors and multiples. For next steps, feedback included, “encouraging students to inquire about ways to modify [their own] tasks. By making their own adjustments, students can take greater ownership of their learning and understanding of the content... and/or challenge their thinking.” The teacher was observed within this review explicitly teaching into how students can construct and modify their own fractions questions to challenge their peers, from changing the denominators to more unfriendly numbers or using equivalent fractions to add additional steps to solve the problem. Across reviewed observation reports, feedback consistently noted student work products such as discussions, and highlighted strengths of teacher practice, challenges and concrete next steps that supported improved teacher practice.

- Interviewed teachers articulated how their professional goals align with the feedback that they received. For example, a teacher related how the feedback received aligned with not only his professional goals to increase engagement, but also that of the schoolwide instructional focus to foster greater student discussion through the Advanced Literacy initiative. The teacher stated that the feedback was to move beyond calling on students to participate, but to use non-verbal agree/disagree signals, which the students themselves could then naturally springboard to a debate, add to the discussion, offer additional reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with the speaker or pose questions to peers. This pattern of alignment across feedback from observations reports and teacher professional goals was consistent between interviews and the reviewed observations.