Quality Review Report

2018-2019

P.S. 123
Elementary 27Q123
145-01 119 Avenue
Queens
NY 11436

Principal: Anthony Hooks

Dates of Review:
February 28, 2019 - March 1, 2019

Lead Reviewer: Luz Cortazzo
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. 123 serves students in grade PK through grade 5. You will find information about this school, including enrollment, attendance, student demographics, and data regarding academic performance, at http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/tools/report/default.htm.

School Quality Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</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>
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<tr>
<td>1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the instructional shifts and Danielson Framework for Teaching, aligned to the curricula, engaging, and meets the needs of all learners so that all students produce meaningful work products</td>
<td>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>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**School Quality Ratings continued**

### School Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that supports the academic and personal growth of students and adults</strong></td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations</strong></td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>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</strong></td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>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</strong></td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>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</strong></td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</strong></td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>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</strong></td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings
Schoolwide assessment practices are aligned to the curricula and offer a clear portrait of student mastery. Across the vast majority of classes, teachers consistently use “I Can” in the learning target with student self-assessment and employ a variety of checks for understanding.

Impact
Meaningful feedback to teachers leads to effective adjustments to the instruction to meet the needs of all learners. Students are aware of their next learning steps regarding academic achievement.

Supporting Evidence

- The school uses multiple assessments, including tiered tasks, and Teachers College running record’s benchmarks at the beginning of the year, middle of the year, and end of the year. In addition, weekly assessments in English Language Arts (ELA) and math, MaxScholar in grades K-2, and Mathletics, in grades K-5 are used to provide learners immediate feedback and support, make adjustments to their planning and drive instructional decisions. In addition, the school’s Instructional team analyzed the data to identify those specific standards with which students struggle across each grade. Teacher analysis of recent data revealed the need to work with students on phonics, reading comprehension and writing and led to the formation of strategic intervention groups in grades 1-2. Progress monitoring is used to adjust groups according to their performance. Preliminary results show that students are improving in Fountas and Pinnell reading levels.

- During a student interview, students stated that teachers show them how to use rubrics and provide them feedback. For example, one student stated, “Teachers give us rubrics so we can get to a higher level. A review of the feedback connected to students’ work products revealed areas of glows, areas of grow and clear next steps for students. Feedback to a student on a grade five math task stated, “Your work is highly organized, you have labeled each step and solved them with skill. The strategies used are correct and your explanation is strong. You solved this tier 1 example well”. The student received a level 4 grade. For a second-grade student, feedback on a writing task stated, “Good job, you have included detailed sentences to describe sea turtles. Your writing has a capital letter at the beginning of every sentence. As a next step, the student was to try organizing the information and reminded to use punctuation at the end of each sentence. For another second-grade student, feedback on a science lab report indicated that the student’s strength was his completing all the steps and resulted in the final product reaching a level 3 performance. In a discussion with students they were able to explain what they had to do next to improve their work.

- Across grades and subjects, teachers check for understanding in a variety of ways. One schoolwide practice includes asking students to complete an “I Can” statement at the beginning, middle and end of each activity. For example, in one Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) class, students were split for parallel teaching and the focus of the lesson was how to use information gained from the illustrations and words in a text to demonstrate an understanding of its characters and plot. Teachers checked for understanding as the students answered the question: “What clues do the illustrations in the story provide to help understand the characters in the story?” Students were observed using the “I Can” statement.
Area of Focus

| Quality Indicator: | 1.2 Pedagogy | Rating: | Proficient |

Findings

Across classrooms, teacher practices provide strategies and scaffolds to serve as entry points for challenging tasks and student discussion. Presently, the use of high-level extensions is not evident across the vast majority of classes.

Impact

Work products and classroom discussions demonstrate higher-order thinking and participation. However, as yet, in the majority of classes, students do not demonstrate ownership of their learning.

Supporting Evidence

- Across most classes, rigorous questioning and tiered tasks, along with questions based on the Depth of Knowledge protocol were evident and reflected a high order continuum level. In a grade five math class, the focus of the lesson was to review adding/subtracting fractions with unlike denominators. The students participated in five stations, led by peers, leading to their demonstrating strong command of fractions. Students moved from station to station in their small groups. Each station had a poster with the learning target posted in the form of an “I Can” statement. Students were expected to explain how they use the “I Can” statement in their learning at the beginning, middle and end. Students solved each station’s work working in small groups and at times independently. They were observed engaged in student-to-student discussions as well as sharing strategies and asking questions. This level of ownership and high-level thinking was not evident across the vast majority of classes.

- Teaching strategies to support students with disabilities and Ells were evident through student use of manipulatives, visuals, sentence starters and frontloaded, repeated vocabulary. In a grade two ICT ELA class, students used graphic organizers, visual demonstrations, oral directions, consistent, repetitive reinforcement and text-based vocabulary to help them use the information to demonstrate an understanding of the characters and plot in a story. The students participated with the support of teacher prompts, the use of repetitive reinforcement of the story and visual cues. Students were able to retell and demonstrate understanding of the story characters.

- Teacher-student-teacher directed conversations were observed in the classes. Students were prompted to turn and talk to a partner or work in a group. Yet, most of the activities were teacher directed. In a grade four ELA writing class, students engaged in a think-jot-pair-share to look at an illustration posted on the interactive board. They were required to answer three questions in five minutes. Students then engaged in a collaborative activity to answer a constructed response question using evidence to support their response and used a graphic organizer to compare and contrast their constructed response answer. Students were observed using restate the question, answer the question, cite the evidence, and explain your answer (RACE) strategy to answer the question. However, in a grade two ELA class, some students were ready to engage in additional and extended work but opportunities for them to extend and expand their learning were not available. All students had to respond to the task with only one or two sentences even though they were ready to write more. One student was able to write an entire paragraph.
Additional Finding

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

School leaders and staff have strategically incorporated the instructional shifts across the curricula in alignment with the Common Core Learning. The use of "I Can" statements and tiered tasks are planned and include inquiry-based approaches for math and science across grades.

Impact

The school curricula promote coherency while also promoting college and career readiness. Tasks are planned to ensure all students have access and are cognitively engaged.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers integrate the instructional shifts by making purposeful connections with grade specific content aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards to support the school's instructional focus. Student discourse and tiered tasks that engage students in critical thinking and understanding in all content areas are the goals to be achieved. The key instructional shifts such as, real world application and using evidence to explain ideas and support opinions are strategically integrated across grades through the aligned curricula. The use of the “I Can” statement in their planning ensures student awareness of the actual learning they are expected to acquire and foster their readiness for their next level while promoting coherence.

- Inquiry results are used to develop and plan learning tasks. In a grade two science plan the learning target asked the students to test and determine which of the mixtures is sticky enough to hold two beans. The overarching rationale for the lesson and unit was to encourage students to plan and carry out investigations by constructing explanations, designing solutions and make predictions on the structure and properties of matter. The procedure incorporated hands-on activities where students were to make predictions on which two mixtures were stickier. In a grade three math plan, the task required students to generate and identify equivalent fractions to determine the correct mathematical strategy and tools to solve the problem of the day as well as show their work. In a grade five lesson plan on addition and subtraction of fractions, the task focused on students answering a real-world problem involving addition and subtraction of fractions referring to the same whole, including cases of unlike denominators. The lesson rationale stated this information would be used to determine students’ level of comfort as they begin the learning task.

- The vast majority of lesson plans reflect tiered tasks modified for groups of students or individual learners in each subject area based on benchmark assessments. In grades one and two the Fountas and Pinnell running record data was used to group students by ability level. Strategic reading periods are formed for grades one and two across the school. In a grade two EIS ELA lesson, running records were used to group the students for strategic support in ELA. Each group was provided a different activity such as, addressing identifying letters and sounds, writing sight words and reading fluently by using a guided reading strategy. This use of data ensures that each student has access to the curricula and will be cognitively engaged.
Additional Finding

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

Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the entire staff focusing on building their capacity to check for understanding and tiered task assignments that promote student discourse. School leaders and staff effectively communicate expectations for next level readiness and create partnerships with families and students.

Impact

A culture of mutual accountability leads to the staff understanding and taking ownership of the expectations. Successful partnerships lead to clear support in students’ progress towards college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- This year the emphasis is on student discourse and tiered tasks. At the beginning of the school year, all staff is provided with non-negotiable Instructional expectations and other administrative protocols. Teachers are expected to provide opportunities for student engagement focusing on allowing students to ask questions, explain their thinking and reasoning, and demonstrate their understanding of the assigned task. School leaders conduct instructional rounds at the beginning of the school year and provide teachers with feedback on the classroom environment, planning, and strategies that support the targeted goals. For example, in order to support more student participation in discussions and demonstrate their understanding of the assigned task, an expectation was created for all teachers to display their learning target in the form of “I Can” statements. Students are expected to explain how they use the “I Can” statement in their learning. Monthly instructional expectations are communicated by the principal to the staff.

- Throughout the year, teachers are provided with professional development addressing how to implement expectations regarding instruction and culture. For example, a coach from Teachers College provides staff development in writing and models writing strategies for the writing workshop segment. In addition, a Universal Literacy (ULIT) coach provides individualized professional learning support and coaches K-2 teachers in the area of Fundations, Guided reading, as well as, leading the professional development for those grades. Teachers hold themselves accountable as evidenced by their presentations to their peers following their attendance at professional workshops to ensure that expected practices are understood and implemented.

- Families receive an overview of expectations for their children to ensure that they are prepared for the next level during “Meet the Teacher” night in September. Parents are invited to visit classrooms in order to see how strategies are taught so they can better provide support at home for their children. Parent teacher communication is fostered through emails, phone calls, apps such as Class DOJO to learn about class events, grade specific newsletters with goals for unit plans on the school’s website, and a monthly school calendar. Additionally, parents are invited to meet with the principal one Saturday each month to discuss college and career paths. All of these activities and methods of communication help support parents in forging a path towards college and career readiness for their children.
**Additional Finding**

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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**Findings**
School leaders support teacher development with bi-monthly evaluative and non-evaluative classroom observations. Prompt, written feedback captures teachers' strengths, challenges, and next steps using the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*.

**Impact**
The effective feedback provided teachers 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 domain being evaluated contains specific, detailed evidence to support the rating. Next steps for improved practice are included at the close of each observation report. School leaders developed an observation schedule that allows all teachers to be observed by each administrator. Additionally, teachers receive an evaluative or non-evaluative observation every two weeks. The first cycles of observations are normed 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. For example, one teacher shared that she received feedback and support on developing lessons for the 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 to ensure positively impacting student performance. 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 scaffolds. In yet 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 consistently provide actionable feedback and follow-up to ensure the feedback is implemented or to offer additional support.

- A review of observation reports reveals teachers successfully implement recommended strategies and demonstrate growth. One observation report commends the teacher for having developed a positive environment in the classroom. The school leader then went on to recommend that the teacher ask open-ended questions to invite students to think and offer multiple responses. Included in the report is an example of questions and prompts the teacher could use, as well as a link to additional resources. In the following observation report, the teacher demonstrated growth in the domain addressing questions and discussion techniques. The effect of the feedback provided was evidenced by improved teacher ratings. Thus, the consistent support and supervision provided teachers positively impacts teachers and students.
Additional Finding

| Quality Indicator: | 4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development | Rating: | Proficient |

Findings

Teachers work to improve curricula and learning through weekly meetings where they analyze student work and data. Across the school, teams of teachers, such as the assessment team are engaged in shared decision making.

Impact

The inquiry process has resulted in strengthened coherence of instructional practices across grades to support student achievement. Structures allow for teachers to be directly involved in decisions that positively affect student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams meet weekly and have structures including agendas, a teacher team protocol, a process for teacher’s collaboration adapted from Data-Driven Dialogue, and supplemental materials to support their work. Each grade sets a specific content focus after a review of baseline and ongoing data from Teachers College Running records, pre and post math assessments, and MaxScholar benchmark assessments, which are aligned with the Common Core Learning Standards and instructional shifts. The focus of these meetings encompasses an integration of the school goals using student data from varied assessments to determine student strengths and learning needs. Additionally, agendas for meetings are co-constructed with team leaders and school leaders to ensure team decisions are monitored through classroom observations to improve the quality of the instructional work, provide support, professional development and suggestions for future meetings. Teachers stated that these collaborations are strengthening their instructional capacity. Teachers on the assessment team expressed gratitude in having the opportunity to collaborate with their colleagues daily, especially those who teach students with disabilities, who provide colleagues with a wealth of strategies for teaching struggling students.

- During a grade level meeting, grade three teachers analyzed a mid-chapter assessment from GO Math!. Using the facilitators’ guide protocol they discussed findings and effective strategies used in teaching equivalent fractions. Each teacher presented their class data for at risk, on level and above level students. Teachers discussed areas where the students were demonstrating strengths, used the appropriate strategy and were able to generate their own fractions. Additionally, areas of weakness were addressed, such as students not checking their work, and the need to reteach the use of less than or greater than. Based on this analysis, they identified a framing question, which targeted strategies to be used to improve student performance. Next steps were discussed and an action plan was developed to target the learning gaps. Teachers report that team decisions on instructional strategies are implemented each week and teachers are required to bring documents to each meeting that reflects their implementation within student work. An analysis of the most recent grade three assessments evidenced progress for groups of students. The team concluded the meeting with a reflection and designed an agenda for the next meeting.

- Distributed leadership structures are in place and teachers collaborate to focus on strengthening the instructional practices across and within grades. For example, the instructional team met over the summer to identify the 2018-2019 instructional focus and outlined a professional learning plan to support schoolwide practices for student achievement. The assessment team coordinates the Fountas and Pinnell running record data across the school and oversees the strategic reading periods for grades one and two. Teachers stated that they have a voice in key decisions that affect student learning across the school.