Quality Review Report

2018-2019

P.S. 139 Rego Park
Elementary 28Q139
93-06 63 Drive
Queens
NY 11374

Principal: Natalie Perez

Dates of Review:
March 6, 2019 - March 7, 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. 139 Rego Park serves students in grade K 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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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To what extent does the school...</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.1 Ensure engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula in all subjects, accessible for a variety of learners and aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards</td>
<td>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>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>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## School Quality Ratings continued

### School Culture

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

### Systems for Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school’s instructional goals and meet student learning needs, as evidenced by meaningful student work products</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Establish a coherent vision of school improvement that is reflected in a short list of focused, data-based goals that are tracked for progress and are understood and supported by the entire school community</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Observe teachers using the Danielson Framework for Teaching along with the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</td>
<td>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Evaluate the quality of school-level decisions, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school, with particular attention to the CCLS</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Area of Celebration

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

### Findings

Teacher teams, such as grade and vertical instructional teams, systematically analyze key elements of work through the Looking at Student Work protocol to hone instructional practice based on student work and assessments. Distributed leadership structures are embedded.

### Impact

Teacher team work results in shared improvements in teacher practice and mastery of goals for groups of students. Teachers play an integral role in key decisions that affect student learning across the school.

### Supporting Evidence

- In the grade five teacher team observation, as part of an inquiry cycle, teachers used the Looking at Student Work protocol to examine the performance of three representative students, one performing beyond mastery, one at performance standards, and one performing below standards. Teacher analysis began with the examination of student work products from the schoolwide performance assessments for opinion writing. Colleagues asked clarifying and probing questions to better understand student work context, and collected their noticings such as student success in using text evidence from multiple sources to support an opinion; Teachers offered changes to instruction such as: revisiting how English Language Learners, (ELLs), and students with disabilities are using sentence starters, graphic organizers and other scaffolds; adjusting the assessment anchor texts or questions so that the content of the material does not hamper student demonstration of mastery of their skills, and adding in the application of think, pair share so that students spend more time discussing their ideas before writing. The instructional focus of this teacher team has resulted in improved student performance for all grade five students according to the internal English Language Arts, (ELA), baseline performance tasks, with 89 percent of the students moving positively, and 50 percent of students obtaining a higher benchmark score than at the beginning of the year.

- Evidence of schoolwide teacher inquiry was consistent and in alignment with its instructional focus to elevate student thinking through peer to peer discourse. For example, grade two teachers examined student performance for their subgroups on the benchmark performance assessments in writing, and noted that student writing lacked structure, needed additional work in organizing their thoughts and the use of text evidence to support their thoughts. Based on their noticings, next steps included revising their next unit of study on research from mentor texts and notetaking, reformulating teacher questions for student think, pair and share, opportunities to hone student mental organizations before writing, and reexamining graphic organizers to better support student organization of their thoughts around cogent ideas.

- Embedded distributive leadership practices within the school support effective teacher leadership to make key decisions on teaching practices. Teachers in the instructional cabinet conduct instructional walks around the schoolwide focus to assess practice and teachers within the Comprehensive Education Plan sub-committees collect, review and monitor data for the action plan to track progress towards school goals. Math and ELA vertical teams conduct cross-grade student data analysis from benchmark assessments to identify patterns and trends on student performance to articulate implications for instruction. These vertical teams, facilitated by teachers with representation from each grade, constructed the schoolwide practice for assessment practices including setting expectations for the Next Steps folder for student academic goal setting across subject areas. The implementation of these expectations were evident in all observed classes across grades, and students of all grades discussed the feedback they received within those folders, thus impacting student learning across the school.
Findings
Curricula across grades and subjects consistently emphasize rigorous habits such as application of reading strategies across content areas and higher-order skills such as problem solving strategies. Curricula and academic tasks are planned and refined using in-class student work and assessment data such as student reading levels.

Impact
While a diversity of learners, including English Language Learners, (ELLs), and students with disabilities, have access to the curricula and tasks and are cognitively engaged in their work, there are missed opportunities to plan for groups of students who are high achieving to elevate their cognitive engagement.

Supporting Evidence

- Curricula and academic tasks consistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher order skills across grades and subjects. Plans for a grade five social studies lesson included utilizing close reading strategies to analyze paintings and images towards not only building student content knowledge of westward expansion, but also to build their critical thinking skills and gathering of evidence to support their thinking. Planned questions following an examination of John Gast’s painting, American Progress, include “What does the painting say about the United States? Use the evidence from the image to explain your thinking.” Planned work for students included gathering further evidence through leveled texts around key events such as the Indian Removal Act of 1830 to discuss the essential question, “How did key forces and events shape nations?”

- Some academic tasks and curricula include plans for advancing the thinking of those students who are already performing at a higher level. For example, math lessons for a grade four Integrated Co-Teaching, (ICT), class included students working in three groups based on student performance on the mid-chapter checkpoint assessments. Each group was to focus on solving fraction problems, with one small group working with a teacher to focus on two different strategies in multiplying mixed numbers and whole numbers, and a second group working with a teacher to solve fraction comparison problems through the use of a diagram. For students who had already mastered the content, plans included students working in partnerships to solve multi-step fraction word problems, holding academic math discourse around the strategies that each student used and coming to consensus on the solution. 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 all students, using student work and performance on assessments such as running records, exit tickets and rubrics and student work. For example, plans for a grade one reading lesson included students gathering evidence of how their character might think or feel, from either pictures or words. Planned supports for ELLs included pictures in charts, previewing unfamiliar vocabulary, and students reading at their independent reading levels. Literacy lesson plans for a grade four/five 12:1:1 class utilized student performance from in-class assessments as well as identified needs from individualized education plans, (IEPs), to provide scaffolds such as differentiated graphic organizers, paper choices, and independent task cards to support writing an informational paragraph from individual research. 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

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

Across classrooms, teaching strategies including student protocols such as the Think Jot Pair and Share, differentiated tasks, graphic organizers and scaffolds consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula.

Impact

All learners, including English Language Learners and students with disabilities, are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks and demonstrate higher-order thinking skills in student work products and discussions.

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, teaching practices include using various protocols to scaffold student thinking around student-to-student discussions and math problem solving. For example, grade five students explored how athletes such as Jackie Robison and Althea Gibson broke various barriers and made lasting impact in society at large. Using the Think, Jot, Pair and Share protocol, students gathered their noticing from differentiated and leveled texts in preparation of student-to-student discussions, first in pairs then to a larger group. Third grade students utilized the study the problem, organize your thinking, line up a plan, verify and explain (SOLVE) protocol to develop their understanding of equivalent fractions. Modeling equivalent fractions using a number line, students applied the protocol to articulate their understanding of math thinking and discuss how to use the number line as part of their plan to solve the problem at hand.

- Teachers utilize various scaffolds including discussion reminders, graphic organizers, differentiated problems and tasks. For example, grade one students used discussion reminder cards with sentence starters that were attached to their thinking jot notes which helped them add more information to the discussion, adjust the discussion or revise their thinking. In a grade one English Language Arts lesson, students worked on differentiated graphic organizers, broken down by pages or beginning-middle-end structures to help them retell the important parts of their leveled independent books. Students in fourth grade worked on tiered and differentiated real-life questions, based on student performance on mid-chapter checkpoint assessments, as they solved comparison fraction problems through diagrams and models. Teaching practices such as the use of protocols and scaffolds allow multiple entry points into the work so that students engage in rigorous tasks.

- Across classrooms, student work and discussions reflected high levels of student thinking, thus, producing meaningful work products. For example, students in a grade four science class participated in a group and whole class discussion around their understandings of force and energy as an introduction into simple machines. Students then worked individually, in pairs or in groups to study a type of simple machines, demonstrate those simple machines evident in commonplace items, or use simple machines to create their own complex machines to present to the patent office. In a grade five class, students explored how different events during western expansion led to the growth and transformation of the United States. Focusing on tiered and visual texts, groups of students focused on events such as the development of the Transcontinental Railroad, the Oregon Trail and the Louisiana Purchase to make connections between texts and images, synthesize details and develop arguments on how their specific events impacted the developing United States in the 1800s.
Additional Finding

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>2.2 Assessment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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Findings

The school uses common assessments, such as the Teacher College Reading and Writing Project Benchmark Assessments and GO Math! unit pre- and post-assessments to determine student progress toward goals across grades and subject areas. Across classrooms, teacher assessment practices such as conferencing and evaluation of student work products reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding.

Impact

Teachers adjust curricula and instruction based on common assessments and make effective in-the-moment instructional adjustments to meet student learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and teachers use formative common assessments such as the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project Benchmark Assessments, summative assessments such as the New York City English Language Arts and Math Performance Tasks, as well as standardized assessments such as the New York State ELA and math tests to determine student progress towards goals and adjust instructional practices to support student learning. For example, school leaders noted in previous years that students across the grades were not making sufficient progress in math from the start of the year to the end of the year, particularly around math problem solving. To address this concern, school leaders and teachers implemented protocols such as the study the problem, organize the facts, line up a Plan, verify your plan with action, examine the results, (SOLVE), across grades to hone student strategies in solving word problems. Student use, or classroom artifacts of problem solving strategies, was evident in all observed math lessons across grades during this review.

- Teachers gather data and analyze trends in student performance and progress to make adjustments to instruction and curricula. For example, inquiry cycle minutes and artifacts provide evidence of grade two teachers using the Analyzing Student Work protocol on a money and time math unit pre-assessment. Analyzing sample groups of students around high, middle and low pre-assessment performances, teachers highlighted student understandings and misconceptions, as well as implications for instructional strategies such as teaching into accumulation of value, and vocabulary understandings of a.m. and p.m. An examination of unit plan versions reveal revisions to individual lesson objectives towards identification of groups of coins, building targeted vocabulary for the unit and utilizing partnerships so that students can verbalize and discuss their noticings around value accumulation of coins.

- Across classrooms, teacher assessment practices consistently use various checks for understanding, including conferences, evaluation of student work products and exit tickets as part of their assessment practices, which informs in-class adjustments to meet student learning needs. During a grade five social studies lesson, groups of students focused on tiered and visual texts on key events during westward expansion relative to how specific events impacted the developing United States in the 1800’s. Following several student conferences and small group instruction, the teacher redirected the class to maximize what they can glean from visual texts using text features such as titles. Students were then seen adjusting their thinking as evident in their note catchers in evaluating the author or painter’s perspective and purpose.
Additional Finding

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

School leaders and teachers consistently communicate instructional high expectations to the entire staff through Principal's Digest memos and individual, grade and faculty meetings. Teacher teams and staff establish a culture for learning that systematically communicates a unified set of high expectations for all students through the schoolwide Next Step folder processes.

Impact

There is a culture of mutual accountability to address and meet staff expectations, and students receive individualized and focused feedback and support so that they own their educational experience in preparation for the next level.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders articulate high expectations for all staff through discussions at faculty conferences, Principal's Digest memos, individual teacher and grade conferences, and a Staff Handbook that details expectations related to instruction, professional development, (PD), and school operations. School leaders meet regularly with teachers individually to engage in reviews of professional growth, expectations for high quality teaching, follow-up based on attended PD as evidenced by the annual professional development log, as well as plans for strategic assignments for intervisitations to support expectations for planning. School leaders further reinforce high expectations for instruction by providing all teachers with PD support in skill building in support of the schoolwide focus to elevate student thinking through discussion and higher-order questioning. 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 professional development support aligned to their needs and interests. Teacher teams collaborate to develop and share curriculum maps, units of study, lesson plans, unit pre- and post-assessments, rubrics and templates for analyzing student work through a variety of means including online platforms, 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 not only consistent content pacing across the grade, but also for administering pre- and post-assessments so that their conversations within grade and vertical teacher teams are focused on student achievement.

- Teachers and staff systematically communicate a culture for high expectations for all students through the schoolwide practice of the Next Steps folder, which not only give them feedback on their most recent work products but also scaffolds such as sentence starters, visual supports for vocabulary, unit specific rubrics as well as the schoolwide grading policy. Interviewed students unanimously stated that they establish goals across content areas that are created collaboratively with their teacher in 1:1 conferences that are recorded in their Next Steps folders, and pointed to specific areas that they are working on to get better based on feedback that they have received from peers and teachers, as well as their own self-reflection. Students shared how they have been successful in reaching their goals, such as being purposeful in which text evidence to use within their literary essays, the pride they feel in their work and feeling prepared for the next level, be it for middle school or the next grade.
Additional Finding

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

Findings

School leaders and 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

Feedback to teachers articulates clear expectations for their practice, aligns with teacher professional goals and supports teacher development.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders’ cycle of observations for all teachers are planned around grade bands, with supervisory responsibilities strategically aligned based on his/her instructional expertise and background; the assistant principal with lower grade supervisory responsibility has expertise and experience in early childhood education settings. Additionally, cycles of observations serve as the basis for teacher peers to support each other through facilitated professional development, (PD), and intervisitations to build instructional practices as evidenced by the annual professional development log. New teachers are also supported with a Lunch and Learn series of PD cycles which are facilitated by teachers that reinforce instructional expectations. Observation reports specifically articulate student work products through direct student quotes and discussion transcripts. Further analysis of student work products is deepened by grade teacher meetings with school administrators that identify patterns and trends for individual and groups of students including English Language Learners and students with disabilities on benchmark assessments, and specific instructional moves for those groups of students.

- Teacher feedback accurately captures strengths, identified as commendations, and next steps, using the Danielson Framework for Teaching, that are aligned to the schoolwide instructional focus on enriching discussions to elevate student thinking through higher-order questioning and opportunities for students to discuss their thinking. For example, one observation report for a teacher noted a commendation for using assessment in instruction, using what students were able to articulate. Concrete next steps included, “by [date], adjust the ‘think-pair-share’ protocol to include a ‘square,’ so that students have an opportunity to generate their own questions and evaluate each other’s questions to weigh the merits of the questions before sharing out to the entire class.” Such feedback result in teacher development and changes in teacher practice. In a visit to this teacher’s classroom during the review, student groups were observed working as part of a square to push their own thinking, each pair asking clarifying and probing questions around the impact and legacies of historical athletes breaking the color barrier.

- Feedback to teachers aligns with teacher goals to support teacher growth as evidenced by review of observations. For example, artifacts for a science teacher included a professional goal setting at the start of the year towards embedding higher-order questions into her lesson plans to elevate student discourse. A fall observation report highlighted her practices in implementing the schoolwide discussion protocol but also outlining the level of questions the teacher asked as measured by the Revised Blooms Taxonomy as part of next steps. The teacher observation report for the following month records the growth in practice with the commendation stating the elevated levels of questioning within the transcript, and the resulting student discussions based on those questions. This pattern of alignment between teacher goals, feedback from observations and changes in instructional practice was consistent through the review of artifacts.