Quality Review Report
2018-2019

M.S. 158 Marie Curie
Junior High-Intermediate-Middle 26Q158
46-35 Oceania Street
Queens
NY 11361

Principal: Henry Schandel

Dates of Review:
April 10, 2019 - April 11, 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

M.S. 158 Marie Curie serves students in grade 6 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>To what extent does the school...</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>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 Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Celebration/Additional Finding</th>
<th>Proficient</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>Area of Celebration</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 of Celebration/Additional Finding</th>
<th>Proficient</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>
Area of Celebration

| Quality Indicator: | 1.4 Positive Learning Environment | Rating: | Proficient |

Findings

Teachers conduct daily morning and afternoon homeroom classes that help coordinate social-emotional learning and guidance for students. The school community aligns professional development (PD), family outreach and student learning with a research-based university program that promotes social emotional learning.

Impact

Each student is known well by faculty through academic and personal check-ins that align with student learning needs. The school community’s promotion of social-emotional learning is building towards student adoption of effective academic and personal behaviors.

Supporting Evidence

- Homeroom teachers conduct check-ins on both academic and social-emotional issues as well as broadcast schoolwide events and announcements. Specific student challenges that arise, including those that impact student attendance, are communicated to colleagues to make sure that staff are knowledgeable and can take appropriate action as needed. Guidance staff also use the homeroom and lunch periods to conduct small group sessions to support specific student needs. Students unanimously stated that they are known well by a member of faculty, be it their homeroom teacher, their content teachers, guidance counselor or principal. This was echoed unanimously by interviewed parents, who stated that their child is known well within the school with children relating to parents the various formal and informal check-ins that teachers do to discuss academic and social-emotional needs.

- The school community aligns its social-emotional learning PD, family outreach and student learning experiences through a university evidence-based program that promotes self-assessment, emotional regulation, constructive expression and mindfulness practices. Select staff members are trained through the university partnership, with plans for an additional seven teachers to attend PD during the school year and the summer. These trained staff members serve as facilitators for social emotional learning PD during staff conferences. In addition, over twenty trained student ambassadors co-conduct focusing and mindfulness experiences within their homeroom and academic classes with teachers. These schoolwide efforts are discussed with parents during monthly principal’s Coffee and Conversations, so that they support these efforts at home.

- All grade six students attend a mindfulness class weekly with a set curriculum that infuses yoga exercises, meditation, empathy lessons and student self-assessment of their current emotional states towards self-regulation. In addition, students were observed in class utilizing a social-emotional self-assessment framework during English Language Arts (ELA) classes to not only self-assess and share their own emotional states at the start of the lesson, but also apply those same strategies as part of their character studies. Students utilized the framework to see how major and secondary characters in The Diary of Anne Frank felt during specific moments, and gathered text evidence to support their analysis of character emotional states. Such promotion of social-emotional understanding and self-assessment is beginning to be adapted by some students, with interviewed students relating the use of focusing and breathing exercises during stressful moments such as the New York State (NYS) tests and in athletic competitions outside of school.
Area of Focus

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

Findings
Curricula consistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills, such as application of the schoolwide social-emotional self-assessment tool to analyze characters, across grades and subject areas. Curricula and academic tasks are planned and refined using in-class student work and benchmark assessment data.

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 to further higher order thinking especially for those who are higher achieving in order to elevate cognitive engagement.

Supporting Evidence

- Planned tasks within lesson plans and unit plans consistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher order thinking across grades and subjects. For example, plans for a grade seven social studies lesson tasked students to analyze and synthesize multiple primary and secondary sources to understand why Thomas Jefferson’s paragraph on slavery was omitted from the Declaration of Independence. Students were to work in groups to analyze what Jefferson stated about slavery and its causes, the dynamics involved within the second congressional revision of the Declaration of Independence, and conduct a small group debate on whether or not Jefferson meant to include slaves in the phrase, “all men are created equal.”

- Some plans included purposeful curricular extensions for students who were already performing at a high level. For example, lesson plans for grade six ELA included students applying the schoolwide social-emotional self-assessment tool to analyze and explain the range of emotions a character faces within a story. Differentiated plans for groups of students, based on in-class and benchmark assessments, included making text-to-life connections with a specific character and writing letters to a character articulating qualities that students admire. For those who were moving towards mastery, plans included small group instruction to help students make connections between character emotions and traits with a graphic organizer and shared reading of a select passage; for those at or above mastery, students were to develop strategies that would take a character out of a specific mood using situations and resources within the story. Such planning for meaningful extensions of learning tasks was evident in some but not the vast majority of planning documents reviewed.

- Curricula are designed in a way that allows access for diverse learners using student work and data. For example, plans for a grade six biology lesson towards examining cell structure integrated student performance data from previous assessments, needs identified in student individualized education plans, as well as in-class performance to form three groups working on differentiated tasks towards building microscope skills. Groups of students were to be supported through a variety of means, including videos and virtual labs demonstrating microscope use including terminology previews, and task sheets that emphasized identification of parts and functions of compound light microscopes. For those who had already demonstrated understanding of the basic parts of microscopes, questions were posed or scenarios that highlighted how certain parts of the microscope can be used. However, such refinement of academic tasks based on student data for those highest achieving students were evident in some, but not the vast majority of planning documents reviewed.
**Findings**

Across classrooms, teaching strategies such as the use of purposeful groupings, differentiated tasks, tiered and translated questions, graphic organizers and scaffolds consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula and support students to produce meaningful work products.

**Impact**

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

**Supporting Evidence**

- Entry points during lessons consistently support high levels of engagement for a diversity of learners. Students in a grade seven ELA lesson worked in homogeneous groups based on reading levels to analyze poems to articulate and provide text evidence of the poem’s themes. Students examined poems with varying text difficulty, with selections from Emily Dickinson to Tupac Shakur, to identify authors’ use of figurative language that support the poem’s theme. In addition to leveled texts, groups of students including students with disabilities were supported with a variety of scaffolds, including: a document that identified major themes in literature; an organizer that outlined the lesson steps towards identifying the theme, supporting evidence and explaining the significance of the evidence for those developing their mastery; a secondary organizer for another group of students that structured charting the figurative language device or technique within the poem. Students were heard discussing in partnerships and groups the use of personification within Tupac Shakur’s “The Rose that Grew from Concrete” as evidence to justify their selection of perseverance as the poem’s theme, while also noting the dual use of the word “rose” as a symbol and metaphor.

- A variety of methods to support access to learning were evident in the lessons observed. Grade seven students in a social studies lesson explored how persuasion can be used to influence public opinion, comparing and contrasting at the start of the lesson President Trump’s use of Twitter and Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s (FDR) use of the Fireside Chats. As part of the lesson, homogeneous groups of students analyzed multiple texts at different levels of difficulty, including excerpts from FDR’s fireside chats from 1933 and 1935, various contemporary letters in response to the Fireside Chats with embedded vocabulary previews, chart of bank closures from 1929 to 1933, a graphic organizer to gather text evidence across multiple sources and differentiated response questions including questions in Chinese and Greek to support ELLs in the class.

- Student work products across grades and subject areas reflect high levels of thinking. For example, grade eight students in an Algebra 1 class conducted a review of equivalent mathematics expressions by simplifying radicals, where students had differentiated cards that stated “I have [mathematical expression]. Who has [mathematical expression].” Students needed to master not only their first expression, but also process and simplify radicals of what peers shared so they can respond in kind if it matched what they had. Radical expressions ranged from $\sqrt{2}$ to $(6\pm\sqrt{243})/3$, where students responded using mathematical vocabulary, which was peer-corrected during the lesson. Students then collaborated in groups to create a classroom set of common misconceptions and missteps towards simplifying radicals to serve as a future reference within the class.
Additional Finding

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

Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use unit-based assessments, performance-based tasks and project rubrics that are aligned to the school’s curricula, which are used to determine student progress toward goals across grades and subject areas.

Impact

Through the use of common assessments, students receive actionable feedback that is recorded in their Feedback Logs, and teachers utilize outcomes to adjust curricula and instruction to support student achievement.

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, teachers use assessments such as the NYS ELA and mathematics tests, online literacy assessments, unit-based baseline and on-demand assessments, performance-based tasks for math, social studies and science that are aligned to the school curricula. Students are given teacher and peer feedback through teacher-created assessments and rubrics by grade, as well as across subject areas that align with specific units of study. For example, on an essay writing task, teacher feedback included a student self-assessment checklist, as well as a task rubric that articulated expectations for introduction, sequence of events, conclusion/moral, word choice and writing mechanics and grammar. Specific feedback stated, “[student], your inner dialogue helped hook me into your story. Next, try to elaborate a little more before jumping to your conclusion. Great job!” Feedback to students in each subject is organized in the students’ Feedback Log, which serves as a system to help students record teacher and peer feedback and monitor their own progress. Reviewed student Feedback Logs recorded skills/standards addressed, feedback from both peers and teachers, as well as their own next steps.

- School leaders and teachers use common assessments such as the NYS ELA and math tests and performance task assessments to determine student progress towards goals and adjust instructional practices to support student learning. For example, school leaders noted in previous years that while many students in the school community who were performing at or above mastery were continuing to do so, students who performed in the lowest third were not making consistent progress towards grade mastery according to the state assessments. To address this concern, school leaders and teachers focused their attention by identifying four to six focus group students in each class and implementing small group instruction to specifically target these students’ needs. Such small group instruction was observed across classrooms throughout this review. For example, during a grade seven social studies lesson, the teacher worked with a small group of students analyzing Thomas Jefferson’s grievances against the British, conducting a modified guided reading lesson with vocabulary previews and key points towards student discussion.

- Teachers utilize student performance and progress in work products and assessments to make adjustments to instruction. For example, plans for a grade seven ELA lesson utilized student performance from reading logs and in-class assessments of student analysis to form student groups working on poetry of differentiated levels of difficulty, to analyze the poet’s literary craft to identify themes. Grade six students within a social studies lesson worked on differentiated texts based on student reading levels, to analyze contemporary responses to Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s Fireside Chats. Such plans that utilized student work to formulate differentiated tasks and supports was consistent in the reviewed instructional planning documents across grades and content areas.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations for instruction to the entire staff through one-on-one, team and whole staff conferences. A culture for learning is evident that conveys high expectations to all students.

Impact

Teachers receive ongoing PD to hone their instructional craft such as designing small group instruction. Students receive detailed and ongoing feedback through the schoolwide practice of the Feedback Log which supports preparation for the next level.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders articulate high expectations for all staff through discussions at schoolwide PD days, faculty conferences, as well as individual and grade/department conferences. Through these individual and group meetings, school leaders detail expectations related to academic instruction, social-emotional learning and school operations. School leaders meet regularly with teachers individually to engage in reviews of professional growth, classroom observation debriefs, expectations for high quality teaching and learning, and follow-up based on attended PD. 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 examples of in-class dialogues, questions asked by teacher and students, and concrete ways to improve practice.

- 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 designing coherent instruction with a focus on small group instruction. Through individual and team discussions at grade, department, and common planning meetings, staff members receive PD support aligned to their needs and interests. Teacher teams collaborate to develop and share curriculum maps, units of study, plans for small group instruction and scaffolds to support student access to content material.

- Staff members have created a culture for learning by communicating expectations and feedback that prepares students for the next level through a variety of means, including the schoolwide grading policy, and the review of project and assignment rubrics before and after units of study. Students receive ongoing and detailed feedback from teachers and peers which is recorded in their Feedback Log for each content area. Students synthesize the feedback along with their own self-assessment to create monthly or unit goals. Interviewed students described how they receive feedback from peers and teachers such as becoming less repetitive with arguments, improving on word choices, using craft elements such as inner voice as part of writing, as well as meet with teachers to discuss their performance in preparation for high school applications. These are reinforced with homeroom check-ins, where teachers address preparation for high school as well as social-emotional issues that students may face. Students shared how such feedback supports improving their work, getting a better grade, and reaching their academic goals.
Additional Finding

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

Findings
The majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations in teacher teams that examine their instructional craft in support of the school goals and analyze achievement data for focused students.

Impact
Teacher team work supports the schoolwide instructional foci for small group instruction and social-emotional learning, improving teacher practice and promoting student success.

Supporting Evidence

- Through structured collaborations, teacher teams analyze key elements of their instruction towards improving their practice as it pertains to the schoolwide instructional foci. Teachers self-selected specific inquiry teacher teams based on their own interests and areas of pedagogical growth. For example, notes and minutes from one teacher team focused on planning for small group instruction across content areas to meet the needs of targeted students. Artifacts from this teacher team include lesson plan analyses, examination of a math lesson where targeted students would work on combining like terms in algebraic equations, and the utilization of visuals and graphic organizers. Further artifacts included teacher team member notes from colleague-driven intervisitations across content areas, including math, ELA and science. Observed practices within the intervisitations included differentiated tasks to practice and apply specific strategies, a preview of questions that students could use to then lead respective student discussions, a review of previous content, and teaching with the use of scaffolds for mathematical problem solving.

- In the teacher team observation during this review, teachers from across grades and content areas worked to incorporate social emotional learning within content area instruction. Teachers in the meeting shared ways that they have integrated such student learning experiences within academic tasks, such as having students visually code a student emotion self-assessment tool within computer science and the use of such self-assessment tool for literature so that students analyze character emotions in reaction to specific events, as a means to build towards understanding character traits and motivations. Such academic tasks utilizing social emotional understanding was observed in all ELA classes during this review. Such teacher team work promotes the achievement of the schoolwide instructional foci, and strengthens the instructional capacity of teachers.

- Teacher teams analyze student data from multiple sources to target interventions and create instructional changes to support student success. For example, artifacts for the school’s pupil personnel committee as part of the pre-referral process, include conference notes articulating noticing in work products for a specific student across content areas, performance based on task rubrics, as well as personal and academic behavior patterns and trends seen across classrooms. Academic intervention strategies discussed include utilizing small group instruction for targeted strategies, utilizing scaffolds such as graphic organizers, sentence starters, visuals and manipulatives, and anchor charts. In addition, articulated plans for a specific student also involve behavior checks, student agenda check-ins, and plans to support organizational skills so that homework, classwork and projects can be managed in an orderly fashion to promote success.