Quality Review Report

2018-2019

J.H.S. 189 Daniel Carter Beard
Junior High-Intermediate-Middle 25Q189
144-80 Barclay Avenue
Queens
NY 11355

Principal: Magdalen Radovich

Dates of Review:
November 14, 2018 - November 15, 2018

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

J.H.S. 189 Daniel Carter Beard 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>
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</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 Quality Ratings continued

### School Culture

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

### Systems for Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school’s instructional goals and meet student learning needs, as evidenced by meaningful student work products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.3 Leveraging Resources</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Findings

Staff time is structured to provide teachers with regularly scheduled time for meetings that are facilitated by teacher-coaches to focus on instructional work that supports the school’s instructional goals for improving reading and writing instruction. Student and teacher programs support flexible scheduling for students with disabilities to be able to transition to less restrictive environments.

Impact

Utilization of teacher time, assignments for professional responsibilities, and student programming improves instruction towards providing multiple entry points for students and increases student access to learning opportunities that lead to college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- To support the instructional goals of the school towards improving reading and writing instruction, school leaders structure professional responsibilities for select teachers to serve as peer-collaborative teachers and model teachers through the Teacher Career Pathways program. These teacher-coaches support their colleagues in conducting data analysis of student performance on State and school-wide reading and writing assessments; support aligning lessons to the Danielson Framework for Teaching; conduct classroom intervisitations and debriefs; create and facilitate professional learning sessions; serve as facilitators in teacher teams to focus time on instructional work. For example, the Collaborative Action Research Project (CARP) team, led by one of the teacher-coaches, conducted an inquiry of formative assessment practices across grades and contents, focusing on student understanding of reading and writing requirements within those assessments. During the teacher team observation, the CARP team examined student performance trends for English Language Learners (ELLs) on various formative assessments, and created plans for modifying the formative assessments, instructional scaffolds and supports, and to research social-emotional instructional methods that would boost mindfulness practices toward student self-efficacy.

- School administrators structure common staff time to build instructional coherence as well as opportunities for students. English Language Arts (ELA) and math teachers meet in parallel common-prep periods so that they are able to plan across content areas. Teachers also meet weekly in grade cohort teams in which they discuss specific student needs across classrooms, as well as make instructional modifications as needed. For example, grade-seven teachers met during common planning time to coordinate texts on various Lexile levels to support multiple entry points for students thus, working to engage more students in challenging academic tasks.

- Administrators make decisions on teaching assignments and student programs to support learning opportunities and increase access to career and college readiness. For example, content-area self-contained teachers are programmed to serve as the special educators in Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) classrooms in the same grade and content area. In addition, teaching schedules for ICT and self-contained classes within a grade are paralleled so that students have flexible scheduling to move from more restrictive to less restrictive environments. Teachers shared that their ability to scaffold and provide multiple entry points for their students have been strengthened due to these changes because they are able to plan together, learn how different scaffolds are being used in other classes as well as know what the expectations are when students with disabilities are mainstreamed within those blocks.
Area of Focus

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

Findings

School leaders and faculty align curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts into rigorous curricula and tasks.

Impact

Instructional plans reflect coherence across grades, and promote college and career readiness by emphasizing higher-order skills. Academic tasks push students to demonstrate their thinking in student discussions across grades; however, the lack of strategic alignment to embed rigorous habits across subject areas limits all students from demonstrating their thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and faculty focus attention on lesson planning that incorporates the Common Core and instructional shifts to build coherence across subject areas. Planned strategies evident across lesson plans include tiered-academic vocabulary, use of sources, argumentative writing, text-based student discussions, fluency, and multi-step problem solving. For example, in a grade-seven math class, students worked with partners or independently to solve the proportion and percentage of a body part relative to whole body, using their own body weights and generally accepted anatomical percentages of body parts to calculate their own respective parts. In a grade-eight, Regents Algebra class, lesson plans include students conducting a cost-benefit analysis to decide between renting or buying snowboarding equipment, using linear algebraic equations with two variables. Students needed to represent their thinking through graphic plotting of the linear equations, determine the price point in which one choice was more cost-efficient than the other.

- Curricula reflect purposeful decisions made by school leaders and teachers to promote skills that prepare students for high school and beyond. The school has increased opportunities and sections for students in grade eight to prepare for the Living Environment, Integrated Algebra and US History Regents exams, based on grade-seven student academic performance as well as interest.

- Unit and lesson plans emphasize multiple designs of academic tasks with numerous higher-order skills. In a grade-six social studies class, planned activities include student-led assessment of contemporaneous rationales provided in text evidence for the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, and whether or not the reasons provided were credible. Whole-group student discussions referenced similar themes from the Reconstruction, and made connections to current-day debates on immigration. In a grade-seven ELA class, students explored the biographer’s craft by analyzing the impact of important formative relationships, and using text-based evidence to make claims on how those relationships have an impact on the historical figure that they were studying, Eleanor Roosevelt. However, school leaders and faculty have not yet strategically embedded these rigorous habits in a coherent fashion across grades. For example, expectations and processes for accountable academic conversations varied between subjects thus, limiting the impact for all learners including students with disabilities and ELLs.
Quality Indicator: 1.2 Pedagogy
Rating: Proficient

Findings
Teaching strategies, through questioning, scaffolds and differentiated tasks, offer multiple entry points for students.

Impact
Students are engaged in challenging tasks in which they demonstrate higher-order thinking skills in student-to-student discussions and meaningful work products.

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, teacher practices included utilizing student partnerships and groupings to support students in gaining more access to rigorous work. During a grade-seven science lesson, student groups progressed through eight stations of inquiry with unique and discrete tasks. Stations, named for focused tasks such as Write It, Research It, Illustrate it, and Organize it, supported multiple ways of student access towards understanding atomic structure. Analyzing previous assessments, a grade-eight teacher created six homogeneous student groupings with differentiated task assignments to construct and solve two-step math equations representing real-world situations.

- Teacher-provided scaffolds included graphic organizers, language supports, differentiated problems and tasks. In a grade-six ELA class, the teacher utilized a graphic organizer to support students in constructing a claims-based thesis statement for a literary essay. Students used differentiated graphic organizers to formulate questions that arose from their reading of Anton Chekhov’s short story The Bet, gather text evidence to support their thesis and a rationale of how the text evidence links to the thesis statement. In a grade-eight English as a New Language class, the teachers utilized bilingual dictionaries, abridged versions of the The Lady or the Tiger short story, vocabulary previews, and modified peer-review rubrics as part of the class work in paraphrasing.

- Student work products and discussions across classrooms demonstrate high levels of student thinking and participation. In a grade-six ELA class, half of the students utilized the Socratic dialogue protocol to discuss the various themes of Greek mythology, including character motivations and causes of conflict while referencing evidence from the Golden Apple myth. The other half of the class, in the observation group, engaged in peer-review utilizing a discussion rubric to evaluate and provide feedback on a student partner’s contribution in the Socratic dialogue.
## Findings

Teachers create and use common assessments, rubrics, and grading policies, aligned to the school’s curriculum, to determine student progress toward goals. Teachers consistently use ongoing checks for understanding across classrooms, and utilize student self- and peer-to-peer assessments to support student learning.

## Impact

Students receive ongoing and actionable teacher and peer feedback about their progress. Results of common assessments such as Renaissance STAR ELA and math assessments and genre-specific writing rubrics are used to adjust curricula and instruction while teachers use classroom checks for understanding to adjust instruction to meet all students’ learning needs.

## Supporting Evidence

- Students are given actionable feedback through teacher-created assessments and rubrics by grades and across subject areas that align with specific units of study. On a grade-seven student personal narrative piece, feedback consisted of two parts, a score on the rubric and written next steps. The essay rubric outlined expectations for audience and purpose, organization, elaboration, use of language and presentation. The next steps stated, “Develop your rising action more and provide more background to your relationship with [character].” In a grade-eight English as a New Language classroom, students used two teacher-created rubrics, including a simplified version for ELLs, to self- and peer-assess student efforts on paraphrasing quotes and text evidence from The Lady or the Tiger short story. Students rated the efficacy of the paraphrase and gave verbal and written feedback to their peers to improve their work.

- Teachers administer the Renaissance STAR assessments in reading and math to all students three times per year to determine student progress towards goals. Content teacher teams meet to discuss the error analysis on common assessments, and adjust the curriculum to address specific student performance shortfalls. For example, ELA teachers met to review student performance on the STAR reading assessment, noted that students did not perform well on using text-based evidence, and determined concrete action steps to incorporate student discussion protocols such as the Socratic seminar which emphasizes evidence-based rationales. In addition, school administrators use the data to provide academic intervention services within the school as well as targeted instruction during Saturday academy.

- Across classrooms, teachers use ongoing checks for understanding as well as self- and peer-assessments as part of their practice. For example, in a grade-six ELA class, the teacher noted the direction of small-group student discussion in the Socratic seminar on elements of Greek mythology, highlighting how students were using character motivations to further their thinking; The teacher redirected the discussion to support their thinking using evidence from the “Golden Apple” text selection. 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. A student shared that she receives the rubric before the assignment is due, uses the rubrics to see what the work required for the highest grade is, and creates a mental checklist to review before she submits her work.
Additional Finding

Quality Indicator: 3.4 High Expectations
Rating: Proficient

Findings
School leaders consistently communicate high expectations connected to the school’s goals and core beliefs about instruction. School leaders and staff consistently communicate expectations and feedback to families that are connected to a path to college and career readiness through structures such as an online academic and behavioral reporting system.

Impact
Ongoing communication and support by school leaders has increased teachers’ understanding and accountability for school leaders’ expectations regarding teaching and learning. Families understand student progress toward high expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders connect high expectations to professional learning activities throughout the year as evident in the schoolwide professional development (PD) plan which articulates the link between professional learning activities and specific domains in the Danielson Framework for Teaching. For example, Monday professional learning sessions focus on ways to support teachers in various ways such as norming lesson planning practices based on the Danielson Framework for Teaching; using formative assessments to inform instruction; developing practices to hone the school’s professional learning communities. Additionally, the school’s PD plan lists the guiding questions for each activity as well as the expected outcomes for each session.

- School leaders articulate clear expectations to staff for professionalism, instruction, and communication through ongoing professional learning, including the opening day conference where administrators articulate clear expectations such as having a clear teaching point visible for each lesson. Regular classroom walkthroughs, with administrators recording their noticings through an online platform, are also conducted by school leaders to gauge instructional practices such as use of formative assessments to inform instruction to plan for future PD. A review of observation reports reflects school leaders focusing on teachers’ use of formative assessment, rigorous instruction, and providing suggestions to support teachers’ next steps. Sample suggestions include exploring different forms of formative assessments, prompting students to analyzing contrasting viewpoints to elevate student discussion and supporting ELLs’ self-assessments using sentence stems.

- School leaders and staff support families to understand their child’s progress toward goals through four marking periods and report cards as well as two parent-teacher conferences and parent open house. In addition, families are kept informed through individual progress reports and via an online academic and behavioral reporting system that enables parents to monitor their child’s progress in real time. Parents reported that they routinely log in to get updates on their child’s academic progress as well as to see how they are behaving and if they are fully participating in class. They stated that they use online resources that teachers have uploaded so they can support their children at home with their assignments if necessary. Parents reported receiving regular correspondence and invitations from the school to meet with teachers to discuss their child’s social-emotional or academic progress in person.
### Additional Finding

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

**Findings**

Teacher teams consistently analyze assessment data and student work for students they share or on whom they are focused while teachers participate in distributive leadership.

**Impact**

Teacher teams promote student achievement goals while strengthening both instructional and leadership capacity. Teachers' voice support decision making regarding curricula and instruction.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Teacher teams, organized around student cohorts, conduct inquiry to discuss patterns and trends of student performance on common assessments such as the Renaissance STAR assessments in reading and math. For example, teacher teams meet to examine the error analysis on common assessments and adjust the curriculum to address specific student performance shortfalls. For example, grade-seven math teachers met to review student performance on the number sense common assessment, noted that students did not perform well on multiplication of positive/negative fractions, and determined concrete actions steps to incorporate teaching into such problems within word problem-solving strategies.

- The school's Collaborative Action Research Project (CARP) team is geared toward improving pedagogy across grades and departments using a shared process. Teachers from across grades and contents conducted inquiry into formative assessment practices monitoring student task comprehension. During the teacher team observation, the team analyzed student performance on a constructed-response formative assessment using a quick write rubric. Teachers reviewed student work collected from multiple classrooms, noting that students across content areas, particularly ELLs and former ELLs, demonstrate difficulty initiating and/or completing a task that requires rationales and supporting details. Team members also examined notes from teacher conferences conducted with ELLs and former ELLs, observing that classroom teachers mention decreased engagement and persistence to complete tasks with complex language demands. In addition to articulating instructional supports to put into place such as language supports and scaffolding complex tasks through concrete steps, the team explored options for weaving in lessons on growth mindset and grit to support student perseverance through challenging tasks.

- Teacher teams are given opportunities to have a voice in key instructional decisions and in curricula. For example, departmental teams are working on making revisions to the schoolwide ELA curriculum, dovetailing the strengths of the current teacher-created literacy curriculum with modules from Expeditionary Learning and Educating Powerful Writers so that reading and writing curricula are aligned. Teachers reported exploring the Expeditionary Learning curriculum on how to integrate tiered vocabulary and amending pacing calendars to focus on key skills based on what they noticed on their start-of-the-year STAR assessment data.