Quality Review Report

2018-2019

J.H.S. 202 Robert H. Goddard
Junior High-Intermediate-Middle 27Q202

138-30 Lafayette Street
Queens
NY 11417

Principal: William Fitzgerald

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

Lead Reviewer: Carlos Perez
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


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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</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>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### School Culture

**To what extent does the school...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</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>
</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>
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### Systems for Improvement

**To what extent does the school...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<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>
</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>
</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>Area of Celebration</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>Additional Finding</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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Quality Indicator: 4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision

Rating: Well Developed

Findings
School leaders and teacher peers support all teachers with effective feedback and actionable next steps, through a strategic cycle of classroom observations and teacher intervisitations. Feedback accurately captures strengths, challenges and next steps, using the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

Impact
Strategies that promote professional growth are elevated through feedback that articulates clear expectations for teacher practice and demonstrates alignment to teachers' professional goals.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders provide teachers with feedback that is actionable and aligns to the teachers' professional goals. For example, feedback on a teacher's observation report offered the teacher a variety of tools and resources that were directly connected to questioning, discussion, and using assessment in instruction. The principal encouraged the teacher to plan for more opportunities for questions between “teacher to student and student to student.” The principal also asked that, over the next two weeks, the teacher visit two teachers, as they are strong in the areas of questioning and discussion, and assessment. Both are areas aligned to the teacher's professional goals established during the initial planning conference, where the teacher and school leader worked to establish the goals. All teacher goals are supported through a series of planning conferences where leaders meet with teachers at the start of the year, several times throughout the school year, and at the close of the year, to review all goals and outcomes.

- School leaders build a strategic observation and evaluation schedule that allows all teachers an opportunity to be observed by more than one administrator. There are three cycles of observations throughout the school year. Cycle one observations are typically informal observations while cycle two includes many formal observations. During observations all school leaders use the same tools, such as a Webb's Depth of Knowledge (DOK) wheel, that has been modified for all subject areas. This DOK wheel was implemented as a result of questioning being identified as an area that school leaders wanted to focus more on, during their leadership meetings. In addition, school leaders decided to focus on engagement and assessment, based on cycle one data from teacher observations.

- Feedback to teachers highlights strengths, identifies next steps, offers resources and gives a clear portrait of future expectations. For example, feedback to one teacher commended her for engaging and challenging her students, and for good use of questions in order to assess students. The assistant principal pointed to a part of the lesson where the teacher spent additional time with a group of students who seemed to struggle. The assistant principal suggested giving these students a checklist to help guide them through the activity, in addition to tools that would help guide all students in self-assessment. The assistant principal informed the teacher that he “would return the week of November 26th” to ensure that she has implemented some of the self-assessment practices recommended. A second observation report reviewed also included commendations on teacher strengths, as well as next steps that included a link to an article entitled, “Climbing out of the Gap,” which focused on culturally responsive teaching (CRT). The principal asked that the teacher read the article and send an email with two examples of how she could implement CRT practices in her classroom.
Findings
Across classrooms teachers use or create rubrics, assessments and grading policies that are aligned to the curricula. Many but not all of the classrooms visited, show how teachers’ assessment practices consistently reflect a varied use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

Impact
Much but not all of the feedback reviewed, is actionable and meaningful to all students. Teachers make effective adjustments to meet all students’ learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- Feedback to students is offered in a variety of ways, including on the assignment rubric where teachers also check off which areas the students have successfully attained. For example, feedback on a student’s writing rubric included praising the student for including strong evidence in her writing. The teacher informed the student that, at times, her information was “unclear or inaccurate,” and also asked the student to “Use features of nonfiction text structures like subheadings, charts, and graphs,” to keep her writing more focused and organized. The teacher also circled and checked off areas on the rubric which the student’s work was aligned to. However, on a different assignment a teacher did not offer feedback that was as actionable as other examples of feedback seen. For example, this teacher wrote, “Way to go, precise and neat, vocabulary could be highlighted.”

- Throughout classrooms visited, teachers used checks for understanding, such as conferencing with students or listening in on student group discussions. During an eighth-grade math lesson, each of the two teachers in the room conferred with students as they engaged in group discussion, and one of the teachers used a clipboard to memorialize students’ responses. During an eighth-grade earth science lesson the teacher conferred with students individually, listened to group discussions, and at one point stopped the class in order to keep students on task. In addition, evidence of students’ peer and self-assessment was reflected on student work products. For example, many of the rubrics included areas for students to self-reflect on their work and give themselves a score, as well as areas for the teachers to reflect on the students’ self-reflection and confirm whether or not their score was accurate. However, not all classrooms visited reflected this varied use of ongoing checks for understanding, with teachers making effective adjustments to meet the learning needs of all students.

- Students regularly use rubrics to check their work, prior to handing in an assignment. During a meeting, one student expressed how rubrics help him to “organize my work and what I need to add so that the reader can understand.” A second student shared how, “Rubrics help me because they guide me and show me which way to go.” Another student explained how many class rubrics include teacher and peer comments and have areas for students to self-reflect. An additional student explained how rubrics help students out a lot because they use rubrics as a guide, and if they lose focus, they use the rubric to get them “back on track.” Many students were able to articulate how impactful rubrics and the feedback written on rubrics are, in helping them to improve their work.
Additional Finding

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

All staff members ensure that curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (Common Core) and strategically integrate instructional shifts. All curricula and academic tasks are refined using student work products and data, including Individualized Education Program (IEP) data and data for English Language Learners (ELLs).

Impact

Coherence of curricula across all grades and subject areas promotes college and career readiness for all students. All planning documents offer access to curricula that cognitively engage all students.

Supporting Evidence

- All planning documents offer explicit data-driven planning for all students, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities. For example, an eighth-grade math lesson plan explicitly shows student groups and the reasoning behind each grouping, such as needing to follow IEP mandates for students with disabilities, or to include visual cues for ELLs or students who may have difficulty staying focused. A seventh-grade writing lesson displays how students will be grouped and the reasons behind the grouping. For example, low level students will complete an elements chart while higher level students will “Create a flow chart that explains how the plot twist was developed by the author.” A sixth-grade writing lesson plan includes the use of station work, based on data about student ability. For example, station one would allow students to select an activity they believe would help them the most; station two students would work on the same leveled-texts with various reading strategies, and station three students would be asked to work on trying to evaluate a nonfiction text by asking, “What changed, challenged, or confirmed my thinking?”

- All staff members ensure that there is coherence in curricula planning which reflects alignment to Common Core and incorporates instructional shifts in lessons across all grades and subject areas. All lesson plans reviewed include essential questions and a list of DOK questions to be used during instruction. For example, a seventh-grade math lesson plan focuses on the use of ratio and reasoning to solve real-world math problems and uses the essential question, “How can we use ratio of parts and a total to find quantities of individual parts?” in order to engage students. A sixth-grade writing lesson plan includes a list of DOK questions such as, “What conclusion can you draw from how the author uses context clues?” An eighth-grade math lesson plan aims to engage students by having them use a notice and wonderings protocol to analyze the connections between proportional relationships, lines, and linear equations. In this lesson plan students are asked to identify what makes any mathematical relationship linear.

- Planning documents show a variety of ways that teachers use data to inform planning for all students to be highly engaged and challenged in lessons. A seventh-grade science lesson identifies students by name, along with the scaffold that an individual student may need in order to have access to the lesson. Scaffolds include a laptop for a student that excels when he types his responses, rather than writes them out, and visuals supports that students can use when engaged in a Socratic seminar. Other lesson plans include scaffolds for ELLs, such as translation of documents, use of technology to assist with translation, and partnering up students with others who can help translate. In addition, lesson plans identify students who have an IEP and lists the modifications that must be followed in order to support those students and give them access to the same curricula that other students take part in.
Findings
Across classrooms, teaching practices and student work products are aligned to the school’s belief about how students learn best, most notably through student discourse.

Impact
Student work products and discussions illustrate Common Core instructional shifts and evidence high levels of student thinking and participation.

Supporting Evidence

- During a seventh-grade English Language Arts (ELA) lesson, students worked in small groups and engaged in active discourse in order to explore foreshadowing, develop a cohesive plot line, and identify tone/mood in setting and characters. Students also identified main events which occurred in each section of the reading and plotted them, using a graphic organizer. During a seventh-grade science lesson, students engaged in a fishbowl style discussion in order to identify the differences between renewable and non-renewable energy resources. During the conversation a student explained how fossil fuels “will eventually run out if we don’t look for other sources of energy,” while another student explained how “Coal lets out air pollution and causes global warming.” During this lesson, many of the students used academic vocabulary and supported their statements with text-based evidence.

- In a seventh-grade Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) math class, student work products and discussions reflected high levels of thinking and productive struggle. During the lesson students engaged in small group discussions pertaining to whether two expressions supplied by the teacher were true or false. During the conversation students could be overheard stating, “You need to break up the whole number into the sum of the quotients” and “Division is the same as multiplying by the reciprocal.” During an eighth-grade earth science lesson, students had to identify, analyze and apply the content of erosion. During student conversations they could be overheard stating, “I think the erosion on the river side is the fastest” and “Points b to d are the fastest because velocity is on the outside.”

- A seventh-grade math lesson involved students in working on the “February Problem of the Month.” During this lesson, students used the assignment rubric while engaged in group discussions. The three-questions strategy presented by the teacher focused on extracting important information and questions from the problem of the month. Students were asked to describe the situation in the task, identify important information, and create a mathematical question to be asked. As students worked in groups, the teacher conferenced with some students and, at times, asked certain groups to visit other groups and share their findings, while asking for members of the other group to provide feedback to their peers. Students used academic vocabulary during discussions and effectively shared their findings with peers.
Findings

Parents and school staff partner in order to effectively communicate high expectations towards a path of college and career readiness for all students, most notably through the use of Academic Parent Teacher Teams (APTT).

Impact

Parents and students are supported towards all expectations and all students are provided with effective feedback and guidance, so that they make progress towards the expectations and own their educational experience.

Supporting Evidence

- All parents explained how helpful and informative the use of the school’s APTT has been in letting them see not only their children’s progress in all subjects, but more importantly, how their children rank amongst their peers. During the APTT meetings parents receive a number that represents their child and they see their child’s progress, along with other students’ progress, by finding their child’s number. Progress is broken down by skill and parents are offered ways and tools that can help strengthen the skills that their children need additional support in. In addition, parents are very knowledgeable of the school’s online student management system, sharing how they can log on at any time in order to see their children’s progress and if their children need to make up any missing assignments. School staff shared how over 75 percent of all parents are registered and actively use the online system to check their children’s progress and communicate with teachers.

- Students take ownership of their learning, most notably through student-led conferences. During the meeting with students, students referenced the effectiveness of student-led conferences and how the conferences help them to share with their families, how they are doing in all subjects. Students shared how they prepare for the conferences and present their progress to their parents “a few times per year.” One student shared, “We let our parents know how we are doing and how they can help us throughout the year.” Several students also explained how “regularly checking our portfolios” is another way they can track their progress. Students explained how they check their portfolios weekly, and sometimes daily, in order to view their grades, determine their progress in all their classes, and to make sure they are well prepared for their next level.

- During the meeting with parents, all parents shared the multitude of ways that school staff members support and partner with them. There are numerous workshops, including one entitled, “Raising a Beautiful Child,” that supply parents with tools to help their children when they are in stressful situations. In addition, staff members provide several workshops throughout the year, like high school application workshops where school guidance counselors work closely with families and students to help select appropriate high schools and provide support in filling out all documents needed for the application process. During the meeting with parents, they all shared that there have been six trips to colleges and universities and some families accompanied their children on those trips.
Findings

The vast majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations, using protocols such as “Looking at Student Work”. Teachers systematically analyze key elements of teacher work, using common students work products and assessment data.

Impact

Teacher instructional capacity is strengthened, which has led to school-wide instructional coherence, improvements in teacher practice, increased student achievement, and mastery of goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- Teams of teachers meet regularly and review a variety of student work and assessment data, in order to address student deficiencies. The ELA team meeting agenda and notes from December 3, 2018, show how teachers focused their attention on argumentative writing. Teachers reviewed several different student work products and developed a list of areas that needed further support, like the format of an argument and the use of mentor texts. Teachers decided that implementing a self-assessment checklist that students can use prior to handing in their work, could be a tool that would help students. Notes and agendas from other team meetings illustrated how teachers reviewed work and implemented ideas that addressed students’ deficiencies, such as supporting claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. Work such as this has led to improved student achievement, as evidenced by an 11 percentage points increase on the New York State English Language Arts assessment, with scores for all students moving from 41 percent in 2017 to 52 percent in 2018.

- Teacher teams meet horizontally and vertically in order to focus on groups of students. Math teachers engaged in cycles of case studies, such as “Scale Drawings” from September to October 2018. This study was developed as a result of an end-of-unit assessment for unit one, from which teachers identified students’ inability to solve problems involving scale drawings, and reproducing a scale drawing at a different scale, as clear areas of focus. At the conclusion of this cycle of study and at the end of unit two, student mastery of these two standards included 75 percent mastery for solving scale problems and 98 percent mastery in reproducing a scale drawing. An identical study was completed from the end of unit two to the end of unit three and students shared even higher success in mastery of specific goals, showing 97 percent mastery in determining whether two quantities were in a proportional relationship and 95 percent mastery in identifying the constant of proportionality.

- Evidence of teacher team meetings was seen through a review of agendas and team meeting minutes across all grades and subject areas. For example, math agendas and team meeting minutes showed how during one session of the students with disabilities math team meeting, teachers reviewed student work products and identified coordinate planes, expressions, and polygons, as areas in need of attention. The teachers implemented personal learning periods that allow time for teachers to work with individual and groups of students who require additional help in those areas. The team also decided to rearrange the curriculum and move geometry to the start of the year, since it addresses skills students need throughout the rest of the year. Strategies such as those helped students make great strides in math, with a 10 percentage points increase in New York State math scores, which moved from 33 percent in 2017 to 43 percent in 2018.