Quality Review Report

2018-2019

P.S. 212
Elementary 30Q212
34-25 82 Street
Queens
NY 11372

Principal: Carin Ellis

Dates of Review:
November 28, 2018 - November 29, 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

P.S. 212 serves students in grade PK through grade 5. You will find information about this school, including enrollment, attendance, student demographics, and data regarding academic performance, at http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/tools/report/default.htm.

School Quality Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></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>
</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>
</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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## School Quality Ratings continued

### School Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Celebration</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>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>Proficient</td>
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### Systems for Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</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>Proficient</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>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>Proficient</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>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>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Indicator:</td>
<td>1.4 Positive Learning Environment</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Findings
The school leaders and staff have created a safe and inclusive school culture through thoughtful structures and professional development promoting a culture of positive attitudes that is strategically aligned to the needs of students and their families.

Impact
Students and adults have an active and meaningful role in decision-making as well as leading school improvement efforts. Responsiveness to community needs has resulted in schoolwide support for effective academic and personal growth of all stakeholders, adults, and students.

Supporting Evidence

- The school’s core belief “to inspire children to learn, to experience, and to achieve” through educating the whole child, provides cohesion to the various efforts to support social, emotional, and physical health for students. Teachers expressed that they feel it is their collective responsibility to help build an emotionally safe environment that is inclusive of all students and includes a respectful welcoming on a daily basis. Parents, staff, and students unanimously agree that the school fosters a safe climate where students’ social, emotional, physical, and academic needs are readily addressed and underpins the decline in students’ chronically absent rate from 14.2 percent from the previous year to 11 percent year to date.

- Students lead various school improvements efforts through student government. For example, students plan and take the lead in organizing the schoolwide College Day celebrations. Students also lead various fundraising efforts for local charities; conduct letter-writing campaigns to the New York City Schools Chancellor for school improvement, such as resolving non-functioning school clocks; lead school beautification efforts and reemphasize positive messages for peers by painting them on school walls. One student shared that a message that they learned in Beautiful Me was painted in the fourth-floor girls’ bathroom to remind each other.

- The school community members strategically align school efforts towards student wholistic wellness. Professional development on Brain Power Wellness, including starting every staff meeting with Brain Power activities, has led to the application of mindfulness techniques across classrooms as a means of centering student and faculty minds and bodies to refocus on the work at hand. Brighter Bites, a community-based organization, works with the school community to distribute over 700 bags of fresh fruits and vegetables to families and coordinate student learning experiences with teachers about healthy eating with such produce. Parents shared that their child comes home excited with ideas about how to eat vegetables. Such schoolwide efforts contribute and build a school culture that supports the academic and personal growth of students and adults. Interviewed students shared that they take mindful breaths before getting angry at their siblings at home and to help them get ready for work after recess, and note that “it is really easy to make friends quickly because everyone understands that if you want to be treated well, they have to treat others well.”
### Area of Focus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
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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. Curricula and academic tasks are planned and refined using student work and data.

### Impact

Coherence in instructional plans that promotes college and career readiness is building across grades but not yet across subject areas. While curricula and tasks are planned and refined using student work and data, there are missed opportunities to plan for groups of students who are high achieving to elevate their cognitive engagement.

### Supporting Evidence

- Unit and lesson planning include focus questions, objectives, standards for math practice, content skills, academic vocabulary, differentiated tasks, and a variety of assessment methods. Lesson plans include fluency and multi-step problem solving, tiered academic vocabulary, provisions for text-based student discussions, use of sources and argumentative writing tasks. In a grade-five journalism unit, students are expected to increase their mastery of informational writing using sources such as interviews and conducting inquiry for accurate reporting. School leaders and faculty have noted during a recent student data analysis session on State exams that students across grades were struggling with main ideas and supporting details, and drawing on information from texts. To address this need, faculty worked on utilizing various discussion protocols such as shared inquiry that helps students practice going back to texts to find supporting details and evidence, and quick focused assessments such as “reading jots” that focus student attention on claims and evidence. Such purposeful decisions to use common discussion protocols and formative assessments are building instructional coherence within reading and writing instruction across grades, but it is not yet fully evident across subject areas.

- Using student work and data, daily lesson planning is designed in a way that enables students to access curricula, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities. Lesson plans for a grade-two English Language Arts (ELA) class use student reading levels and phonemic-awareness assessments to construct small-group instruction with Foundations as well as independent work on exploring vowel teams. Based on previous student performance on assessments, examples of planned supports in a variety of lesson plans include the use of differentiated math games; applications of discussion protocols and rubrics that are scaffolded with sentence starters towards student discussions; the use of student checklists in informational writing that serve as student-specific goals following one-to-one conferencing with the student.

- Some plans include curricular extensions for students who were already performing at a high level. In a dual-language Spanish immersion class, plans for grade-one students include five differentiated stations: three groups working on letter-sound connections, one group working on identifying vowel combinations, with one group challenging students who had already mastered such concepts to construct complete sentences telling a story based on picture prompts. In a grade-five class, math lesson plans indicate that students who have demonstrated mastery in dividing with decimals are to serve as peer teachers to those who were still developing mastery. While such arrangements for supporting the high-achieving students is evident in some plans, supporting high-achieving students is not evident in the vast majority of plans thus, potentially hampering some students furthering their academic mastery.
Additional Finding

Quality Indicator: 1.2 Pedagogy
Rating: Proficient

Findings

Teaching strategies, through student groupings, questioning, scaffolds, and differentiated tasks, offer multiple entry points for students with opportunities to be engaged in genuine and rigorous discussions.

Impact

Through consistent teaching practices that offer multiple entry points to the curricula, students are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks and demonstrate higher-order thinking in work products and in discussions.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers utilize partnerships and groupings to support students in gaining access to rigorous work. During a grade-three social studies lesson, student groups participated in rotations through work stations to analyze historical and current photos. Through multiple stations with different images, students made connections across environments, noted changes over time and developed their own theories on the reasons why people modified their physical environment. Using previous assessments, teachers in a grade-three Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) class utilized parallel teaching of small groups to explore student noticings and mathematical strategies on number pairs. Students were observed participating in group and partner discussions utilizing various protocols such as show and share and were provided with scaffolds such as sentence starters and peer questions to help sustain purposeful conversations.

- Teacher-provided scaffolds include graphic organizers, differentiated problems and tasks. In preparation for a unit test, students in a grade-four math lesson chose their review format in math rotations: between three differentiated independent review supports, two math review games or a schoolwide Spiral Review concept practice for students who felt they were ready. Grade-one students worked independently on their informational writing piece, supported by an informational writing checklist that highlighted a specific focus to improve their writing. Examples of highlighted goals, differentiated based on teacher assessments of the student writing, included writing different parts about the topic on different pages, using labels and words to give facts, and using punctuation to end sentences. Across classrooms, such scaffolds supported multiple entry points into challenging tasks so that all learners demonstrate higher-order thinking skills.

- Students produce high levels of work and discussion across content areas. Grade-five students served as peer teachers in small groups, using the I do, we do, you do protocol to first demonstrate their mastery of dividing with decimals, solving problems together, and then peer checking their independent work. In pairs, grade-one students discussed how squirrels could aid seed dispersal in a city park. Students were heard discussing how sometimes squirrels forget where they hid some of their acorns which could help spread the seeds in city parks. Across classrooms, the student work and discussions reflected high levels of participation and student thinking, thus producing meaningful work products.
Additional Finding

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

Teachers use common assessments to determine student performance and progress toward goals and use ongoing checks for understanding such as exit tickets, conferencing, and student self- and peer-to-peer assessments.

Impact

Using common assessments, teachers adjust instruction and curricula through targeted small-group instruction. To meet all students’ learning needs, teachers make effective adjustments by redirecting or reteaching students while students provide timely feedback to their peers.

Supporting Evidence

- Common assessments, such as Teachers College running records, on-demand writing assessments, *GO Math!* pre-, mid- and post-unit tests, enable teachers to gather data and analyze trends in student performance and progress and implement adjustments to improve student performance on subsequent assessments. For example, a review of teacher notes on the adding and subtracting decimals mid-chapter assessment shows student names and plans for small-group instruction to review the relationship between tenths, hundredths, and thousandths; another teacher planning book review showed levels of student mastery from the on-demand narrative writing assessment with plans for small-group instruction around figurative language, use of dialogue and transitions.

- Teachers use exit tickets, questioning, and conferencing to assess student mastery and to inform student groups and activities. For example, pairs of students in a grade-five math lesson worked in self-selected differentiated review centers based on the previous-day exit ticket as a means to get ready for the unit assessment on dividing with decimals. In a second-grade classroom, the teacher worked with a small group of students on vowel teams based on students’ reading levels and previous 1:1 conferencing. Across classrooms, teachers were checking-in with individual and groups of students. From these check-ins, teachers were able to redirect students, reteach, or draw attention to fellow students for support. During a grade-three social studies lesson, the teacher conferenced with three different groups of students, noticed that students were describing what they saw in the artifacts rather than looking for evidence of how people made modifications to their environment. The teacher redirected the students to refocus their attention and highlighted a group of students who were noticing the changes to the environment.

- Interviews of students indicated that the practice of having students use rubrics to self-assess, monitor their own work and give peer feedback is consistent across grades and content areas. During the meeting with students, in describing their work samples, students spoke about using rubrics “to help me how to get better,” and that “there is always room for improvement.” For example, a grade-three student shared that his math partner told him to try a different math strategy because he was making “silly mistakes;” a grade-five student shared that his peer reviewer said that he should stop writing too much and to maximize his words so that they are more concise in his storytelling.
Additional Finding

Quality Indicator: 3.4 High Expectations
Rating: Proficient

Findings
School leaders consistently communicate high expectations for professionalism and instruction to the school staff and for student achievement and college and career readiness to students and their families.

Impact
School leaders hold teachers accountable for meeting high levels of professional expectations through ongoing professional development (PD), and families understand their children’s progress towards college and career readiness through online platforms, school events, and meetings with staff.

Supporting Evidence

- High expectations for professionalism and teaching are launched through the opening-day folder and consistently reemphasized throughout the year as evidenced in the PD plans. A review of notes and agendas of recent PD indicates that teachers are conducting workshops for Looking at Data to notice patterns and trends on student performance; grade teams to identify student strengths and challenges within units; to note strengths and areas of growth on math instruction across grades; to plan for station teaching to differentiate instruction. School leaders conduct formal and informal observations to hold teachers accountable for these expectations and use the Danielson Framework for Teaching to provide meaningful feedback to teachers in multiple cycles of observation.

- School leaders and faculty use the Remind App, ClassDojo, and email for continuous communication with parents. Consistent subject area updates from teachers support parents’ understanding of what is being taught and their children’s growth in meeting benchmarks. Staff, as well as parents, track progress to know when requirements have been met. For example, a parent shared how the teacher noticed that her child was not participating in class and group discussions, and worked out a plan to create a daily discussion participation chart for discussion on a weekly basis. Parents are registered to use the online platforms to find out about homework assignments and words of the week, communicate about attendance, and see how their children are doing on classwork. Online communications are also used to remind parents about upcoming events such as workshops for applying to middle school, Brain Power workshops, and volunteering opportunities to distribute fresh fruits and vegetables with Brighter Bites.

- School staff consistently communicate high expectations regarding students’ pathways towards middle school, and college and career readiness throughout the school year. The guidance counselor meets with all grade-five families to discuss individual middle school selections in conjunction with the middle-school application information night for families. School faculty is planning a schoolwide Career Day in which parents and community members share their experiences with students. School leaders communicate expectations towards college and career readiness through virtual college tours and through the student government-planned College Day. Parents stated that they appreciated the weekly event updates from the guidance counselor and attending parent workshops on the middle school process because although they had older children who had already gone through the process, the online application process was daunting for them.
Additional Finding

<table>
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<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
The vast majority of teachers are engaged in inquiry-based, structured professional collaborations. Across the school, teacher teams meet systematically to analyze assessment data such as running records and State exam data, student work products, and to share teaching strategies.

Impact
Engagement in inquiry-based, structured professional collaborations has strengthened teachers' instructional capacity resulting in schoolwide instructional coherence and increased student achievement across grades. Systematic analysis of student data and work products has resulted in progress for groups of students, including increased mastery of goals for kindergarten and grade-one students.

Supporting Evidence

- The vast majority of teachers are engaged in inquiry-based teams including grade teams, pre-kindergarten to grade-five vertical and content-specialty teams such as special education and dual language. Inquiry teams look at student performance data to make schoolwide instructional decisions that positively impact student achievement. For example, school leaders and faculty noted that in previous years the slowing of growth in Teachers College running records reading levels for students in the upper grades, but that grade-four students consistently made the largest gains according to the State ELA exams. Teacher teams examined strong instructional practices across grades, and subsequently, implemented various discussion and shared inquiry protocols with accompanying rubrics so that students articulate their learning and understand expectations for discussions and collaborations across grades and subjects.

- Both teachers and school leaders spoke positively about the work of teams and specifically highlighted building the capacity of teachers to use data in a meaningful way to improve instruction. Increased expectations for discussions have resulted in a positive performance trend for all students in the school's internal assessments such as DIBELs in lower grades. For example, according to the DIBELS grade-one reports, all students demonstrated increased mastery with the number of students reaching proficiency moving from 58 percent to 83 percent and a corresponding drop in students below grade proficiency. Such growth is echoed in reading levels in upper grades, and in the 2018 State ELA exam for all students including 5 percent increase of students scoring level 3 and 4 over the previous year.

- Teacher team work builds instructional capacity through systematically looking at key elements of teacher work. For example, faculty conducted a “Looking at Data” inquiry by examining schoolwide student math performance results on the first math unit and the State math test, identifying glows and grows for student strengths and challenges. While the number of students scoring level 3 or 4 has increased by 6 percent from the previous year, mathematical problem-solving instruction emerged as the problem of practice for vertical teacher teams. They outlined the strengths as well as the areas of growth needed for improved instruction. Identified strengths included the use of pre- and post-assessments, student-constructed problem-solving notebooks that serve as references, and math talk prompts. However, discussions articulated that these practices were inconsistent across the grades, and consistent use of math vocabulary was necessary across the grades. Teams collaboratively planned for grade-specific problem-solving approaches that build from drawing pictures and models as well as consistent charting across grades thus, making shared improvements in teacher practices.