Quality Review Report

2018-2019

P.S. 220 Edward Mandel
Elementary 28Q220
62-10 108 Street
Queens
NY 11375

Principal: Josette Pizarro

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

Lead Reviewer: Evelyn Terrell
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

### Instructional Core

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 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>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>Area of Focus</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>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## School Quality Ratings continued

### School Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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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>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Systems for Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school’s instructional goals and meet student learning needs, as evidenced by meaningful student work products</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Observe teachers using the Danielson Framework for Teaching along with the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Evaluate the quality of school-level decisions, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school, with particular attention to the CCLS</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.4 Positive Learning Environment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
</tr>
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Findings

The school’s approach to culture-building, discipline, and social-emotional support is focused on building a positive and inclusive environment through the implementation of positive behavior intervention supports (PBIS), peer mentoring by students, recognition of all cultures through the International Day festival, Unity Day, and character development through the book of the month. The school provides strategic training for students, staff, and families through the PBIS kick-off assembly and the Equity Committee, as well as training in conflict resolution and student peer mentoring.

Impact

The school has established a safe environment aligned to its goals where all constituents respect each other and students have a voice through peer mentoring. Professional development (PD) supports effective academic and personal behaviors.

Supporting Evidence

- The school has a diverse culture and has implemented the PBIS program where students, parents, and staff participate in a kick-off assembly at the beginning of the school year, establishing norms for appropriate behaviors that support a safe environment. Students make posters in preparation for the kick-off and during the assembly chant the school’s motto: “Mighty Tigers Stay on Track.” Students get “Tiger Tickets” when they are on track. For example, students who complete classroom tasks receive tickets from their teachers. Students can trade in their individual tickets for a prize or work together as a class to earn a special reward from the school. Parents sign a contract to support the school in building positive and appropriate behaviors for all students. The school celebrated “Unity Day” in October in which everybody wore the color orange to stand against bullying and support kindness, acceptance, and inclusion.

- Trustworthiness, respect, accountability, cooperation, and kindness (TRACK) represents the traits students learn through the book of the month. In November, the students read Same, Same, but Different by Jenny Sue Koscetki-Shaw, which focuses on understanding and accepting other cultures. In June, the entire school community celebrates International Day to acknowledge all cultures through dance, food, and costumes. During the month of December, students read Love by Matt De La Pena. A review of documents shows that two classes worked together in a partnership to write the word love in another language, which they displayed on classroom doors. For example, they used post-its to write the word AMOR. The teachers took pictures of the post-its and the two classes and displayed them around the school. Students also express their voice in building a positive school culture through peer mediation. Students in grades four and five make up the Peer Mentoring Team. When students have a problem, they make an appointment to meet with the team to discuss the problem during their lunch period. The students on the team shared that they are proud to have a voice in helping their peers come up with solutions to solve their problems. These activities align with the school goal to build positive character traits that support academic success.

- The school Equity Committee provides workshops to the staff focused on understanding unconscious biases. The Learning Environment Survey shows an increase in teachers’ recommending families to attend this school from 70 percent in the 2015-2016 school year to 82 percent in the 2017-2018 school year. Families participate in PBIS training and students, trained by school staff, become peer mediators. The school also provides assemblies to students around the themes of respect and accepting diversity through the Respect for All citywide initiative. The guidance counselor provides all teachers training on using therapeutic crisis Intervention strategies (TCIS) in order to help students manage their behaviors.
Findings

Across most classrooms, teaching practices reflect the belief that students learn best with “I can” learning targets to support student agency and metacognition. Students are consistently engaged in differentiated tasks through partnerships, pods, and groups, which support multiple entry points for all learners.

Impact

Teaching practices align to the curricula and the Danielson Framework for Teaching and incorporate the instructional shifts. However, not all students have the opportunity for choice or are offered strategic extensions into the curricula to demonstrate higher-order thinking skills.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal shared the belief that students learn best through metacognition and student agency in order to have a clear understanding of what they need to do. In a lower-grade class, students had the choice of selecting a topic for writing about their own informational book. In another lower-grade classroom, students worked in small groups or partnerships on math tasks assigned by the teacher. In one partnership, two students played a game using dice to create and solve subtraction problems, such as 6 - 5 = 1. In an upper-grade class, students had the choice of selecting different “magic square” fraction cards with mixed numbers and unlike denominators. In another upper-grade class, groups were assigned math tasks by the teacher to complete. During classroom visits, teachers displayed learning targets such as “I can take notes and read a chunk of text straight through” and “I can add and subtract facts within 20 and demonstrate fluency for addition and subtraction within 10.” Across classrooms, students are able to engage in metacognition as demonstrated by the learning targets. While students had choice in selecting a task in most classrooms visited, in others teachers assigned the tasks. Thus, while the school’s belief that students learn best through student agency is apparent in many classrooms, in the vast majority of classes, not all students have opportunities to select tasks of their own choice.

- Across most classrooms, students worked on tasks in pods (consisting of three students), partnerships, and groups of four or more. Students in an upper-grade class had different articles to read based on their instructional levels. In their groups, the task required students to select text-based evidence that supports the main idea of their article. Student worked together on the task, with different groups finishing at different times. However, there were no strategic extension activities offered to support higher-order critical thinking for students who had completed their assignments.

- In one classroom, students worked in groups using the debate strategy to argue for or against a particular practice, such as the use of plastic bags. In one group, a student in support of plastic bags shared that the bags can be recycled and used again. Another student in the same group, who was against the use of plastic bags, stated that plastic bags kill animals and cause pollution. While circulating among the groups, the teacher reminded students to use text-based evidence from their assigned articles to support their answers. The students in one group continued to debate without referencing evidence from the article. Thus, while students used their prior knowledge to support their claims and counterclaims, some lacked additional tools to help them be more strategic in identifying specific evidence from the text, in order to boost and extend their arguments and fully complete the task.
Findings

School leaders and staff provide units of study across the curricula aligned to the Common Core and integrate the instructional shifts with the use of the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP) and approved Department of Education (DOE) curricula. Most essential questions in unit plans and academic tasks consistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher order skills.

Impact

Students have access to curricula and tasks that promote college, career readiness skills, and provide instructional coherence across grades.

Supporting Evidence

- Units of study across content areas ensure that students have access to curricula that build upon prior knowledge and key skills so that all students are prepared for the next grade level. The DOE approved curricula include GO Math! Amplify science, and Passport, a social studies program, which are all aligned to the Common Core standards, provide a common framework across the school, and builds coherence that supports college and career readiness skills.

- Reading and writing units designed by the staff incorporate TCRWP skills. Writing strategies include claim and counter-claim with text-based evidence from various sources. For instance, a task in an upper-grade class required the students to read the article, “A School Fight Over Chocolate Milk,” take notes developing their positions using text-based evidence, and then debate their claims or counterclaims in a group. Leveled libraries offer students both informational texts and fiction. The use of academic language is present across subject areas, such as minus, subtract, is equal to, and plus, which supports math comprehension in kindergarten. Grade five social studies units include frontier, transcontinental, and settlement. Students build fluency in problem-solving using the GO Math! curriculum, which aligns to the Common Core. The science curriculum provides students with opportunities to investigate, make observations, and take measurements to identify materials based on their properties. For example, in an upper-grade science lesson, students were observed recording observations about water molecules during the process of chromatography.

- All curricula units incorporate essential questions across subject areas to support higher-order thinking skills. For example, in a grade-three social studies unit on China, an essential question states, “How do culture, geography, and history shape a community? How are world communities the same? How are they different?” In a kindergarten science unit, an essential question was, “What do living things need to live and grow?” and a grade five math unit included the question, “How can you use compatible numbers to estimate quotients?” Consequently, the use of essential questions promotes coherence, rigor, and higher-order thinking.

- Academic tasks require students to use manipulatives such as the use of dice to develop fluency in adding and subtraction in a lower-grade class. Students in a grade-three class engaged in tasks that required them to identify character traits with supporting text-based evidence for those characters. A student stated that the character Toad was lazy because in the text it stated that, “he did not want to clean up.”
### Additional Finding

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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>2.2 Assessment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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#### Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers use writing rubrics, math wondering and noticing sheets and a schoolwide grading policy, along with an analysis of State data aligned to the school’s curricula, to assess student achievement. The vast majority of teachers consistently assess students’ work during lessons using checklists, and students engage in self and peer assessment using post-its and checklists.

#### Impact

Teachers provide students with actionable and meaningful feedback on post-its and rubrics, so that students know their next learning steps. Ongoing classroom assessment allows teachers to make adjustments to support student achievement.

#### Supporting Evidence

- Across numerous classroom and hallway bulletin boards, student work samples reflect feedback on rubrics, with written comments by teachers on post-its. The comments express what the student has done well in the work sample and next steps for improvements. For example, feedback on a writing assignment for a lower-grade student stated, “I like how you used transition words in your work. Your next step is add detailed steps.” In an upper-grade opinion writing assignment, the feedback highlighted areas on the writing rubric where the student’s work met the criteria on a four-point scale. The student also received feedback from the teacher on a post-it which stated, “You did a great job starting your claim and providing evidence.” The next step for this student was, “Make sure you state your opinion and provide a counterargument.” Teachers use math wondering and noticing sheets to help students break down word problems. Students are given a math word problem, and they must record what they notice and wonder about the problem prior to solving it. This activity provides the teacher with feedback about how the student is processing the problem.

- The schoolwide grading policy aligns to the curricula across content areas and grade expectations. Students are assessed on a scale of 1-4, which aligns with the State assessment proficiency levels, where level 1 is well below, 2 is below standard, 3 is at grade-level proficiency, and a level 4 indicates that the student is excelling. Teachers receive a copy of the policy, which details expectations for projects, classwork and participation, and unit assessments across content areas. Teachers analyze State assessment data results at the beginning of the school year, which provides them with feedback about where student need more supports. For example, in grade three, the ELA data showed that students required more support in developing the main idea and including supporting details on constructed writing responses.

- Teachers consistently check for students’ understanding during lessons. Prior to students starting group work, most teachers conduct a review in which they ask students if they have any questions or do a thumbs-up/thumbs-down check for understanding. Teachers circulate among the students as they work in groups and record the names of students who need more support. Identified students are retaught the skill in a new small group or one-on-one with the teacher.

- Students use checklists and post-its to engage in self-assessment and peer assessment. A review of peer feedback on a post-it in a lower grade stated, “I like how your words matched your picture.” An upper-grade student self-assessment on a math task stated, “Next time I can get all the questions right and I can draw diagrams next time.”
**Additional Finding**

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

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the staff aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*, using weekly staff newsletters, “Classroom Absolutes” memos, and walkthroughs, along with training from TCRWP consultants. Families receive monthly newsletters with curricula overviews, notification of school events through emails, student progress reports, and workshop opportunities.

**Impact**

Administrators and teachers share mutual accountability for high expectations, and families receive supports to help their children develop college and career readiness skills.

**Supporting Evidence**

- At the beginning of the school year, all teachers receive a memo from the principal outlining expectations for the upcoming year. These expectations include that teachers meet with their grade-level peers for planning and mapping units of study, use data to drive their instruction, and maintain lesson plans with content that reflects all subject areas and the components taught. Examples of literacy lesson components include the read-aloud, shared reading, guided reading, and interactive writing. Math expectations include mental math, independent activities, and small group tasks. Classroom absolutes include formulating “I can” learning targets, developing student goals, using the workshop model, having collaborative discussions, using rubrics/checklists, and implementing PBIS. The administration conducts walkthroughs to hold teachers accountable for all classroom expectations. In addition, teachers shared that they hold themselves accountable by engaging in self-initiated intervisitation with colleagues to observe teaching strategies, such as collaborative discussions.

- Teachers receive weekly newsletters to keep them abreast of school events and instructional practices, as well as daily announcements posted in the main office. A review of a newsletter for the week of January 7, 2019, provided staff with a reminder that students should have tools such as rubrics, checklists, choice of paper to work with, and post-its as they engage in their tasks. A reminder to teachers was that learning targets should incorporate the word by, such as “I can write equivalent fractions by finding a common denominator.” Teachers have in-class training from TCRWP consultants who model the workshop model and writing process, as well as providing support in creating units of study and conducting student conferences. School leaders foster this training by providing a schedule that outlined substitute coverage for lower-grade teachers to attend PD with a TCRWP consultant.

- Families receive monthly newsletter that include a unit-of-study overview from each grade and clusters. In addition, they participate in curriculum nights, where teachers provide overviews of what their children will learn during the school year. Workshops for parents include Family Literacy, Career Readiness Skills, and Family Fun Day, in which families take trips to the Hall of Science and the Metropolitan Museum. Parents are involved in preparing for the schoolwide International Day in June, where all cultures are celebrated.

- Parents receive progress reports for their children, which includes information about their children’s academic performance, reading goals, attendance, and special programs, as well as about personal and social growth. Information is sent to parents through the REMIND app, email, and robo calls.
Additional Finding

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<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 engage in weekly, structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations using the School Reform Initiative (SRI) tuning protocol to support the Common Core. Teachers have embedded leadership roles as facilitators, turn-keying weekly PD and providing input during administrative meetings.

Impact

Professional collaborations result in improved teacher practices that build instructional coherence across grades, support increased student achievement, and foster teacher leadership.

Supporting Evidence

- All teachers participate in weekly structured collaborative inquiry on grade-level teams. The teams use the School Reform Initiative to look at students’ work and make instructional decisions about how to support their academic growth. The grade-three inquiry team focused on selecting strategies they can use in the classroom to support students who have difficulty identifying character traits and supporting details. The facilitator invited a teacher to share a student’s work. The team took turns reviewing the work sample and gave warm and cool feedback, agreeing that the student was able to provide character traits such as bossy and mean. However, the student needed help with identifying text-based supporting details. The team suggested strategies such as a matching game in which the student could match details to a particular trait. Another strategy suggested the use of colored pencils to highlight the supporting details in the text. The team selected the highlighting strategy and will discuss it at the next meeting. A review of State ELA data for the 2017-2018 school year reflects an 8 percent increase over the 2016-2017 school year, demonstrating the impact of professional collaboration on student achievement.

- The administrative cabinet, consisting of the principal, assistant principals, math coach, and grade leaders, meet to discuss data trends and strategies for the lowest one third learners. The school is providing support to English Language Learners (ELLs) to build language acquisition with a protocol for conversations through the use of the SCAMPER strategy.

- School leaders embed opportunities for teacher leadership development across the school. The principal supports shared leadership through teacher book clubs and articles. In December, the principal distributed the article, “The Eight Characteristics of Effective School Leaders,” to teachers. Cabinet meeting notes indicate that teachers created questions based on the characteristics in the article to create a school survey. The instructional cabinet will use the teachers’ answers to develop effective supports for the staff.

- Teachers share input with the administration on schoolwide decisions, such as adding the word by to learning targets so that students have a clear understanding of lesson expectations. Grade leaders facilitate inquiry teams and share findings with the administrative staff. Teachers attend workshops at Teacher’s College and turn-key PD during the extended days on Mondays and Tuesdays, focusing on the workshop model and the writing process, and facilitate full day PD. These opportunities build teacher leadership across the school and strengthen instructional practices to improve student learning.