Quality Review Report

2018-2019

P.S. Q255
K-12 all grades 75Q255
158-40 76 Road
Queens
NY 11366

Principal: Gregg Lopez

Dates of Review:
January 16, 2019 - January 17, 2019

Lead Reviewer: Adam Breier
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. Q255 serves students in grade k through grade 12. 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>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></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>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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</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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<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>
<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>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
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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>Well Developed</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>Area of Focus</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>Well Developed</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

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

Findings
School leaders consistently communicate high expectations and provide training to the entire staff. Expectations connected to a path to college and career readiness are effectively communicated with families by school leaders and staff.

Impact
A culture of mutual accountability exists around setting Professional Learning Community (PLC) agendas and teachers’ maintenance of student binders. Successful partnering with families includes information sharing and daily written communication that support students in their academic and social progress.

Supporting Evidence

- High expectations regarding the design and delivery of instruction, as well as professionalism and day-to-day operations for this multi-site school, are shared with staff through a variety of tools, including a faculty handbook, website, weekly memoranda, and meetings with faculty. Faculty handbook topics include the responsibility to become deeply familiar with students’ Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), collaborations between the teachers and paraprofessionals who constitute classroom teams, being an active listener, management of student behavior with a focus on accentuating positive behavior, and maintaining consistent classroom routines. Expectations are also shared regarding the materials that are to be included and regularly updated in student binders, including items such as the student’s Behavior Support Plan (BSP), social skills checklist, programs, and annual IEP goals. Additionally, the principal sends daily morning emails that detail events for that day, future events, as well as available resources.

- A culture of mutual accountability is present in teachers’ expectations that the principal will integrate their feedback about PLC sessions into determining future PLC session topics. All teachers are expected to maintain student binders and articulation packets that include course grades, common assessment results with the dates on which they were last updated, narratives that detail students’ areas of celebration and growth, the different rewards to which the student positively responds, socialization and language skills, and ability to work independently. Teachers rely on each other across the school and between sites, so that when students move between grade bands, course sections, teachers, and sites, the students’ new teachers and paraprofessionals will have an accurate picture of their new students and be able to plan and deliver instruction according to their needs.

- Communications with parents evidence the partnership with parents that is maintained by school leaders and teachers to ensure student success. In addition to the parent handbook, event calendars, fliers, and communications from the principal and parent coordinator, all teachers utilize a communication notebook daily to share important information about children with parents, including tips on how parents can implement strategies at home to help reinforce their children’s progress. One parent stated that as a result of communication notebook entries, “I can reinforce what’s going well for my daughter, help with homework, and reward her.” Another parent praised the communication booklet as a resource because it was through this tool that she was able to implement the use of visual cues with her son, enabling him to successfully attend to both personal and academic daily tasks. Parents also discussed their use of the First, Then board, a tool used across the school to help focus students on time management and task completion, to help their children accomplish tasks at home, as well as embed moments for their children to take strategic breaks and rewards so that they could successfully navigate homework assignments.
### Area of Focus

| Quality Indicator: | 4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision | Rating: | Proficient |

#### Findings

Written feedback issued after classroom observations accurately captures teachers’ strengths, challenges, and next steps using the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. An effective system drives the use of teacher observation data in the design and facilitation of professional learning (PL), as well as informs decisions regarding teachers’ assignments.

#### Impact

While feedback to teachers makes clear the expectations for teacher growth and the supports available to help teachers meet them, the feedback is not currently aligned with goals for professional growth. Additionally, modifications to PL and teacher assignments do not presently result in improved student success.

#### Supporting Evidence

- Observation reports include feedback that captures teachers’ strengths and weaknesses, and are accompanied by next steps teachers should take to improve their practice and student success. For example, in one report, the teacher was praised for positive organization and use of physical space to maximize students’ opportunities for success. Feedback given to this teacher was focused on the teacher identifying and using transitional cues for all students to promote their independence and ownership of daily tasks. The school leader attached a variety of samples to the observation report to help support the teacher. Another report included advice to the teacher on selecting high-interest non-fiction readings in order to increase student engagement. Other examples of feedback to teachers advised them how they could use verbalized task directions along with visual supports to guide students toward positive academic behaviors.

- There are also examples of feedback to teachers that are linked to the schoolwide focus area of improving teachers’ use of data. For example, one teacher was advised to more consistently utilize data-tracking sheets during class that could be used to inform modifications to instruction. Other examples included advice on implementing student self-assessment activities as well as using both individual and student-group data collection methods in order to broaden the scope of information that could be used in modifying and designing instruction. However, alignment of feedback with either the professional goals that teachers set for themselves at the beginning of the school year or with the schoolwide focus on the use of data is inconsistent as evidenced by the various observation reports that did not contain feedback about either to teachers.

- Analysis of classroom observation data from the 2017-2018 school year showed that assessment was an area of focus common to teachers across the school. This informed multiple data-usage initiatives, as well as their accompanying PL for teachers. In addition to PL offered to teachers during an all-day session in November, PL on the use of data is embedded within relevant PLC agendas and delivered to small-group teacher cohorts on Monday mornings. As this PL is directly connected to an initiative that began in September 2018, evidence of the impact of this PL on student learning cannot yet be determined.
Findings
School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and the instructional shifts with an emphasis on the use of text-based evidence. Curricula and tasks are planned and refined using student work and assessment data.

Impact
Purposeful decisions build coherence and promote college and career readiness for all students. Adjustments to material and the tools students use during instruction ensure access and engagement for diverse learners.

Supporting Evidence

- Curricular documents across grade-bands evidence consistent alignment with the Common Core Learning Standards and integration of the instructional shifts. The shift that involves the application of a real-world skill to the study of math is evident in a variety of lesson plans. For example, a grades-six-through-eight lesson plan indicates that each student will determine how much money, disaggregated by denomination, they would need to spend in order to make predetermined purchases. In another lesson plan, students would also work with money but by matching amounts with items that they could purchase. Additionally, students are tasked with supporting claims with details and reading a balance of fiction and non-fiction. In a grades-six-through-eight lesson plan, students are to read a recipe and use information from it to justify how much fruit they will add to a fruit salad. Students are also tasked with reading short fictional pieces as well as non-fiction.

- The lesson plan for a grades-three-through-five class includes not only each student’s IEP goals and the list of goals already mastered by each student, but also the specific next steps each student needs to take to master the goals toward which he or she is still working. A kindergarten-through-grade-two lesson plan includes narrative descriptions that detail the different tools and strategies each student would receive in order to help them reach their goals. Similar levels of planning for students with different learning needs is included in other lesson plans for the classes of the same grade band, kindergarten-through-grade-two lesson plans, as well as for classes designed for students in grades six-through-eight. Examples of these strategies include having students read leveled passages and answer questions of a particular type such as multiple choice, yes or no, or reading comprehension. In addition, an art lesson plan includes adjusted versions of the central question so that it would be aligned to each students’ learning needs.

- There are also lesson plans that include students’ IEP goals, but without evidence of the planning that would reveal how teachers intend that they, and the paraprofessionals in the room, would assist students in reaching those specific goals. For example, a kindergarten-through-grade-two lesson plan includes IEP goals for each student that indicate students’ goals to match numbers, complete simple insert puzzles, and complete tasks in a timely manner. There is no indication of the planning for strategies and tools in order to help students meet those goals. A grades-six-through-eight lesson plan indicates that a student “…will identify literary elements after reading 25 stories in class – character, title, main idea, and write 15 sentences about the story in his notebook,” without indicating what this student should accomplish during the specific lesson for which the lesson plan is intended. Other examples from this lesson plan indicate that a student will answer five comprehension questions after reading 12 texts on the student’s reading level. Additionally, multiple lesson plans indicate that paraprofessionals “…will observe and assist teacher and students as necessary,” without including the strategies that paraprofessionals should take in order to serve the specific students to whom they are assigned.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.2 Pedagogy</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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Findings
Across the vast majority of classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect an articulated set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Across these same classrooms, teaching practices strategically provide multiple entry points and high-quality supports.

Impact
Shared beliefs among staff that students learn best when they are engaged in a multi-sensory and differentiated classroom are evident in all visited classrooms. Additionally, all learners are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks and demonstrate higher-order thinking skills in student work products.

Supporting Evidence

- Students in all visited classes were engaged in differentiated tasks using a variety of learning modalities. In a kindergarten-through-grade-two classroom, students were working with manipulatives to thread beads onto a string, using a hammer in response to teacher-prompted instructions, and identifying colors and letters through touch and sight. Additionally, in a grades-three-through-five class, one student read aloud while the other students engaged in reading and writing tasks aligned with their individual goals. Other examples of students’ use of multiple modalities were observed as students used touch and sight to identify the different fruits and utensils they would use to make a fruit salad, and arranged manipulatives to work through math problems. They also understood instructions as to academic and personal behaviors through teachers’ use of verbal and pictorial representations of directions, and used electronic assistive devices or pictorial flashcards to communicate with the adults in the room.

- In addition to the written and verbal directions to students that were shared by teachers and paraprofessionals, various modalities were available so that students could remain on task and transition from one activity to the next. Students used goal sheets and laminated cards that represented the different stages of a lesson. These cards were placed on daily agendas that were differentiated for each student. As students began activities, they would remove the card that represented that activity. Once an activity was completed, the card would be returned at which point the student would remove the next activity card. Additionally, students used First, Then boards in order to monitor their completion of more immediate tasks.

- In all visited classes, teachers and paraprofessionals monitored students, provided individualized supports, and engaged students with differentiated materials so that they could all participate in appropriately challenging tasks. All students in a grades-six-through-eight class worked on individualized reading, writing, and math tasks while the teacher and a paraprofessional circulated throughout the room, offering targeted assistance. Four other students worked at individual workstations where they engaged in computer-based tasks geared toward each student’s specific needs while being supported by the presence of a paraprofessional assigned to respond to these students’ questions or concerns. Similarly, students in all visited classes worked on individually differentiated tasks across content areas covering topics such as meteorites, the ancient civilizations of Sumer and Mesopotamia, and making predictions using text evidence.
**Additional Finding**

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

High quality assessment practices are embedded across all subjects and grades and on display in hallways and on classroom walls as well as on student work, offering a clear portrait of student mastery. In addition, in-class assessment practices consistently reflect the varied use of ongoing checks and student self-assessment.

**Impact**

Assessment practices provide actionable and meaningful feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement. Teachers’ assessment practices lead to effective adjustments that enable students to be aware of their next learning steps.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Across the school, examples of feedback evidence clear portraits of student mastery and provide students with information that they can use for increased achievement. For example, written feedback to students advises them to name more than one item to show their understanding of a solid, add additional facts to support claims, and show all of their work. It also asks them to carry over numbers when adding, check their answers, make sure they write legibly, and ensure the use of punctuation and capital letters, where appropriate. Student work collected during the school visit, along with work in students’ binders, illustrate how students have been able to use teacher feedback and improve on their skills in future assignments.

- In addition to the written feedback that teachers give to students, teachers also offer oral feedback in classes where students required one-to-one support by teachers in conjunction with paraprofessionals. Teachers and paraprofessionals gave feedback to students as they progressed in activities involving verbal and non-verbal communication, applying math to real world situations such as navigating the purchase of household goods in a store, as well as reading. Teachers and paraprofessionals also offered feedback related to students’ goals as they progressed through activities.

- Across most visited classrooms, there was evidence that teachers are assessing students' learning and making adjustments to instruction, as necessary. In all classes where all instruction was individualized, teachers and paraprofessionals conducted checks for understanding on data tracking sheets specific to the skill being taught and behavior improvement goal. Adults actively checked for students’ understanding of how to use sounds in forming words, responding to verbal prompts, and identifying and writing letters, words, and sentences. In addition to teachers’ checks for student understanding, students were self-assessing their progress toward task completion as well as their IEP goals.
**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**

All teachers are engaged in teams that consistently analyze student work in cycles of inquiry that reveal targeted areas of student need and actively address them in their work toward fulfilling the school’s goals. Teachers are empowered to positively affect student learning through service as unit coordinators and PLC facilitators.

**Impact**

Collaborations within teacher teams strengthen teachers’ instructional capacities and build schoolwide instructional coherence, while data reveals student achievement increases. Teachers’ voices are integral to decisions regarding the formation and facilitation of committees, PLCs, and a schoolwide data-feedback process.

**Supporting Evidence**

- All teachers belong to a PLC that conducts inquiry-based analysis of student work and assessment data. The grades three-through-five PLC met to complete their review of students’ BSP progress. From the three students’ work samples analyzed the prior day during step one of this process, one was selected for deeper analysis during step two. Two questions that drove teacher discussion during the meeting addressed whether the available data reflected positive impact for the students and the change in frequency of students' target behaviors. Teachers discussed adjusting the information included in the graphs they use to chart students’ behaviors to include days of the week so that trends could be identified as related to days of the week and other related signifiers such as teacher absences and days that are adjacent to a holiday. One teacher stated and all present agreed that, “Given the fact that many behavioral infractions are reactive, a deep analysis of the events they are reacting to will allow for a more effective data analysis going forward.” Example focus topics that have driven the work of PLCs so far this year are curricula, BSPs, unpacking the essential elements of instruction, pre- and post-test analysis, IEP goal writing, and designing instruction to include multiple entry points.

- In addition to the analyses of student work and data conducted during PLCs, teachers also spoke about how their practices are improving because of the collaborations with their peers that occur within this structure. One teacher shared, “I wasn’t sure how to use thinking maps. I used a preparation period to observe my colleague and I adapted what she did to my classroom. Because of this I was able to guide my students in using a tree map and a bubble map and they did a great job.” Other teachers added that they have been able to improve their classroom management practices and planning of differentiated instruction as a result of their collaborative peer-work.

- Six of the school’s eight sites have a lead teacher who serves as the unit coordinator who makes decisions regarding day-to-day management and facilitates the unit’s behavior and IEP committees. Unit coordinators also facilitate unit cabinet meetings, increasing the decision-making participation of teachers at each site. Additionally, teachers serve as facilitators of each PLC. In response to teachers’ calls for a revolving system for PLC coordinator, one PLC is currently piloting a rotating system for designating a teacher as PLC facilitator. Other examples of teachers’ voice being integral to decisions that impact the school include the creation of a social skills committee as well as the schoolwide Data Folder Friday process that has embedded a feedback process within which school leaders provide teachers with feedback on how they are analyzing and then using class-based data.