Quality Review Report

2018-2019

P.S. 052 John C. Thompson
Elementary 31R052
450 Buel Avenue
Staten Island
NY 10305

Principal: Jane Mccord

Dates of Review:
November 27, 2018 - November 28, 2018

Lead Reviewer: Buffie Whitfield
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>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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Quality Ratings continued</td>
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**School Culture**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></th>
<th><strong>Area</strong></th>
<th><strong>Rating</strong></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>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>
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</table>

**Systems for Improvement**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></th>
<th><strong>Area</strong></th>
<th><strong>Rating</strong></th>
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<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>
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<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>Well Developed</td>
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<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>
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<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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</table>
Findings

The school’s approach to culture building and social-emotional support is informed by a theory of action based on the belief “that students are first and all staff members are available to support students”. This belief is embedded throughout the learning community.

Impact

The realization of this theory of action results in a safe and inclusive environment which supports progress toward yearly goals and meaningfully involves student voice. All students are known well by more than one adult who helps to personalize attendance supports and coordinate social-emotional learning.

Supporting Evidence

- All staff believes and understands that they have the responsibility to positively impact student achievement. The school leaders and staff know all students. This knowledge was witnessed during the review as students addressed the school leaders with a greeting and/or hug. Secretarial and custodial staffs are inviting and supportive to the community. Students shared that they can go anywhere in the school for support, including the school aides, the security agent, the custodian and the secretaries. Parents and teachers echoed this sentiment, specifically stating that the school is welcoming and inclusive. Students are encouraged to communicate effectively and become independent. Parents are more than satisfied with the school’s administration and faculty and shared that they find them to be helpful and supportive in all areas of their children’s lives. As a result of this nurturing environment, students are adopting effective academic and personal behaviors.

- Teachers guide students’ social-emotional learning with the goal of decreasing the number of behavior infractions and suspensions. To support staff in assisting students in developing positive social behaviors the guidance counselor team created a schoolwide protocol to support behavioral needs of individual students. Scheduled Pupil Personnel Team (PPT) meetings with the student's team of teachers, assistance with data collection and review, as well as classroom management supports, such as cool down corners, and end-of-lesson check-ins were implemented. Over the last two years these supports resulted in a decrease of level one, two and three incidents.

- According to the staff, parents and teachers the inclusive atmosphere contributes to an environment where conflicts and incidents have been significantly lowered. Teachers are provided professional development in areas of de-escalation, and ongoing support from guidance counselors. They push-into classrooms to work alongside teachers, assist in the development of student personal and academic behaviors. Equipped with training in de-escalation, selected staff members team up with administration, counselors, deans, social workers, an attendance officer, parent coordinator, secretaries and other staff to work with students and families in implementing attendance and behavior intervention plans. Staff members meet weekly to identify those students with attendance problems and they conduct outreach to families. Outreach efforts result in personalized meetings with the students, phone calls and home visits by assigned staff members, including the principal. These coordinated efforts and services resulted in an increase of students attending school on a more regular basis as evidenced by the attendance data.
Findings
School leaders support the development of all teachers, including those new to the profession, through cycles of formal and informal observations, targeted professional development, and assistance from coaches. Observations by school leaders provide feedback that is actionable and articulates expectations with clear next steps.

Impact
Although school leaders offer effective feedback that results in positive growth for all teachers as of yet, observations are not as strategically targeted to ensure maximum effect for deepening teacher development.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders develop a schedule for observations informed by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Feedback includes commendations and recommendations aligned to the instructional focus. In addition, school leaders engage in learning walks targeting specific instructional practices that are used to give all teachers specific formative feedback. New teachers receive additional feedback on their performance from mentors, a school-based coach and an iterant literacy coach. For example, English Language Learners (ELLs) were struggling with skills such as context clues, making text-to-world connections, and identifying themes. The principal then determined that some teachers needed additional support in putting more emphasis on reading and vocabulary development strategies and provided them with consultants and coaches. However, while most teachers are constantly provided with feedback that supports strengthening their pedagogy, as yet strategic cycles resulting in maximizing teacher development is not in place.

- A professional development plan outlines topics for weekly sessions for the school year. These planned professional development (PD) sessions were adjusted based on Advance data regarding teacher performance and preference. For example, some of the PD topics included using data to inform differentiation of instruction and looking at student work. In addition, based on individual or group needs, teachers engage in the practice of intervisitation using the evidence, analysis and action protocol. Teachers reported that these PD sessions have been essential in improving the quality of their instruction and helping them meet their professional goals.

- A review of observation reports reveals that teachers receive written feedback that captures their strengths, assesses the quality of teacher and student work, and provides actionable next steps relative to student engagement, questioning techniques, and assessment during lessons. For example, in one report, the school leader commented, “Use popsicles sticks or another means of randomly calling on students to support engagement.”
## Additional Finding

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

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and strategically integrate problem solving. Curricular and academic tasks are planned and refined using student work and data for diverse student groups.

### Impact

Tailored modifications equip all students, including ELLs and students with disabilities, with the necessary skills for the pursuit of college and career opportunities.

### Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and teachers reported that all curricula across grades and content areas are Common Core-aligned. The current reading and writing curricula is a mixture of programs based on standards and teacher-created units of learning. This resulted from teacher team collaboration, and input from school leaders. Moreover, Understanding by Design is used in the planning process to guide curriculum, instruction, and assessment. This coherent curricular approach helps teachers prepare all students for college and career opportunities. Most recent reports indicate that 98 percent of the school's former fifth graders passed their sixth-grade core classes.

- Across all grades and content areas, instructional planning documents purposely integrate the instructional shifts into the curriculum. Activities such as using textual evidence to support claims, reading texts closely, engaging in multi-step problem solving, and using different approaches to solve problems are evident throughout curriculum maps. Activities targeting the shifts are incorporated across disciplines and help students to acquire academic vocabulary, strengthen fluency, and build communication and reasoning skills. A first-grade math unit plan focuses on essential questions such as, “How can we analyze and describe embedded numbers using five groups and how can we reason about embedded numbers in varied configurations using number bands?” A third-grade reading unit requires students to determine how the action of characters can affect the sequence of events within a story and the story structure. In a corresponding lesson plan, students will use text evidence to draw conclusions and demonstrate understanding. Math unit plans include UDL modifications, such as preferential seating, leveled groups, differentiated tasks, tape diagrams, grid paper checklist, and place value mat. Thus, all students are exposed to rich and rigorous curricula focused on the Common Core and college and career readiness skills.

- Teachers plan academic tasks that emphasize rigorous habits and higher order skills aligned to Webb's Depth of Knowledge (DOK). Plans incorporate differentiated activities and utilize scaffolds, visuals, translated materials, manipulatives, and strategic grouping. The vast majority of lesson plans have embedded, purposeful instruction and academic tasks challenging all students, including ELLs and students with disabilities. Scaffolds are planned for students with disabilities, including flexible groupings and tiered interventions. Students are assigned to differentiated groups based on readiness level. For example, a grade five math lesson targets how to apply properties and place value to multiply a decimal and whole number. Students in the lowest tiered group are tasked to demonstrate their thinking by completing problems during a reteach with the teacher using place value charts. The intermediate group is to complete several text problems independently then work with a peer to assess each other’s answers. The advanced group is provided a thinking map to explain the conceptual understanding of regrouping with decimals while keeping their products in the correct place value position. Planning for differentiated activities is evident across grades and subjects resulting in all students being cognitively engaged.
**Additional Finding**

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.2 Pedagogy</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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**Findings**

Across classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and the school's articulated set of beliefs using the collective teacher efficacy and learning progression. Teachers provide multiple entry points and supports into the curricula, and offer opportunities to further advance student thinking.

**Impact**

Students of all abilities have access and are engaged in suitably challenging tasks and produce meaningful work products that push them toward their learning targets and goals.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Across classrooms teachers strategically used scaffolds and multiple entry points to provide access to content for all students. During lessons, teachers used various types of graphic organizers and mental models to support different types of learners. Teachers tailored instruction, based on exit tickets from prior lessons and thoughtfully arranged groups to reflect needs of students. Supports for learners were posted in most classrooms focusing on academic language with picture cues around language for their current unit. Charts describing the writing process and current unit anchor charts were in evidence with students utilizing the supports. For example, in a second grade classroom, while the teacher was conferring with different students, other students were working on writing stories incorporating dialogue using the models as well as the checklists provided by the teacher.

- School leaders’ and teachers’ belief about how students learn best is rooted in collective teacher efficacy. The belief centers on meeting students where they are in the learning progression and providing necessary scaffolds so the students can progress. Across classes, students engaged in complex tasks such as multi-step problem solving and demonstrated the ability to use accountable talk in their interactions, which in most cases lead to their facilitating their own learning. In a third-grade ELA Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) class, students worked in differentiated groups using text features to determine important information within the text. Students were observed using scaffolds, learning progressions, manipulatives and process charts to support their understanding.

- In multiple classrooms students were observed working diligently through guided reading and writing. Furthermore, in most classrooms teachers employed brief “turn and talks” to support comprehension. Students were observed responding to teacher questions, such as, “What is schema?” and “What details from the text support your answer?” These questions supported teacher-to-student interactions. Student work products evidence high-order thinking skills and improved learning outcomes.
Additional Finding

### Quality Indicator:

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<th>2.2 Assessment</th>
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<td>Rating:</td>
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<td>Well Developed</td>
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### Findings

Teachers use curricula-aligned assessments and rubrics to create a clear picture of student mastery. Teachers employ the results from common assessments such as, Running Records, and on demand writing assignments to enable curricular and instructional adjustments and track student progress toward their goals. In class assessment practices consistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding, and student self-assessment.

### Impact

The actionable and effective feedback provided to all students results in their being able to make progress to their goals and clearly demonstrate increased mastery.

### Supporting Evidence

- The school uses a range of common assessments that include Running Records, and Teachers College on demand writing assessments and narrative reading learning progression. The analysis of assessment results has led to the development of instructional goals for teaching and the reinforcement of skills across all subject areas. Based on English Language Arts (ELA) data, classroom and intervention teachers reinforce the ELA units of study already being taught and provide extensive supports. For example, teachers break down strategies and academic vocabulary as part of small group instruction that includes the use of paired texts on common themes to help students build prior knowledge and engage in discussions on thematic topics that build on academic vocabulary. Furthermore, the school gathers targeted information from these assessments to track student progress towards goals in all content areas for all learners.

- During the student meeting, students shared their understanding of their assessment data and their status relative to the continuum of mastery. They referenced their goals generated from the use of a rubric, which provided meaningful feedback and classroom assessment data. Students not only spoke about their next steps but they were able to elaborate on how they were going to achieve their goals. Teachers gather data that includes formative assessments, rubrics and student work to ascertain levels of student learning. The use of data to inform and adjust instruction in all content areas is consistent across classrooms. Across all classes teachers were observed conferring with students and providing them with strategies for improvement. These practices have proved to be effective as evidenced by the increased proficiency on the NYS State ELA from 57 percent in 2017 to 66 percent in 2018.

- Students engage in self-assessment as well as partner assessments. In a math class, students used conferring questions to coach one another. Questions included, “How does what you’re saying match your model?” and “What did you do to solve this?” Students are providing feedback to one another and receiving the opportunity to develop their ability to give constructive feedback. During the interview, students shared writing samples that were peer-assessed. Students also shared work products that compared earlier writing to more current pieces. For example, their next learning steps included suggestions to add more details, and to use text evidence to support claims.
### 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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#### Findings

The vast majority of teachers are engaged in inquiry-based collaborations on grade, content teams, including a math task force focusing on coherence across the grades. School leaders embed teacher leadership opportunities in the school structure through a variety of school level teams.

#### Impact

Professional collaborations have resulted in schoolwide coherence in mathematics and increased student achievement across all grade and content areas. Through effective collaboration and teacher leadership, teachers play an integral role in decisions that affect student learning.

#### Supporting Evidence

- Horizontal and vertical teams meet and work collaboratively to ensure that units of study continue to address the Common Core Learning Standards and instructional shifts. Teams also analyze student work, establish small group plans, and revise units and assessments. Each week teachers are provided professional learning opportunities where they analyze student work and data. Teachers use the Evidence, Analysis and Action protocol. Evidence is based on the success criteria and disaggregated by performance level that is categorized by – advanced, proficient, progressing and novice. Teachers engage in analysis of the performance level and prioritize a next step for each student group. Then an action plan incorporating high leverage strategies, which is labeled “just right” instruction for each student group, is created. One result of their work was the creation of an ambitious goal for increasing learning across all student performance groups. Another result was the development of visual scaffolds for ELL students to support their language acquisition. Consistent use of this protocol is based on the teachers’ belief that it provides a common forum for examining student work.

- Teachers shared that the teacher team learning culture has promoted ongoing communication between colleagues. They enjoy working together and sharing information. They believe one of the most effective forms of professional development is visiting classrooms to look at environments and to observe colleagues. Teachers regularly visit classes independently. One teacher stated, “I can learn from my colleagues during team meetings and intervisitations.” Another teacher shared, “We have learned so much about reading and writing through sharing information and strategies across grades, such as, designing tasks based on weekly analysis of student performance data,” resulting in increased proficiency on the NYS State assessments.

- Teachers stated that leadership structures have led to thoughtful teacher involvement in school matters. Each grade has an assigned subject leader in the area of reading and writing. Teachers share responsibilities including facilitating planning in their particular content area. Additionally, they act as liaisons regarding communication and record keeping. All teachers on the grade share in the writing of the monthly newsletter. Moreover, teachers play a vital role in key decisions that affect student learning across the school. For example, teachers identified the need to determine central ideas, analyzing their development, and summarizing the key supporting details as the focus standards for grades one through five. Kindergarten’s focus standard included analyzing how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text. One teacher stated and colleagues agreed, “We are very lucky that we can collaboratively have a voice in curricular decisions to improve student outcomes.”