The Quality Review Report

The Quality Review is a two-day school visit by an experienced educator. During the review, the reviewer visits classrooms, talks with parents, students, teachers, and school leaders and uses a rubric to evaluate how well the school is organized to support student achievement.

The Quality Review Report provides a rating for all ten indicators of the Quality Review Rubric in three categories: Instructional Core, School Culture, and Systems for Improvement. One indicator is identified as the **Area of Celebration** to highlight an area in which the school does well to support student learning and achievement. One indicator is identified as the **Area of Focus** to highlight an area the school should work on to support student learning and achievement. The remaining indicators are identified as **Additional Finding**. This report presents written findings, impact, and site-specific supporting evidence for six indicators.

Information about the School


School Quality Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><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>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>Proficient</td>
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## School Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</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>
</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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<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>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>
</tr>
</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>
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</table>

Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations on instruction and professionalism via written communication and teacher-facilitated professional development. Staff members consistently communicate the importance of college and career in students’ educational journeys.

Impact

Mutual accountability for high expectations is achieved through teacher directed intervisitations and feedback on lessons. Students are prepared for their next educational steps through high school level courses and trips to neighboring colleges.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders consistently communicate high expectations for instruction and other elements of the Danielson Framework for Instruction to the entire staff. Instructional expectations are delineated to the school community via written and verbal communication. Opening faculty meetings outline the school’s instructional goal of student engagement as well as the school goals which encompass a focus on delivering differentiated instruction. These goals are articulated through written communication such as outlining the expectations for the Workshop Model of instruction by detailing the role of the teacher and student during this instructional delivery model, deconstructing the flow of the day for mathematics instruction, and teacher as well as student responsibility for the Gradual Release Model during instruction. Additionally, communication around the school’s instructional focus explains the elements required for an engaging lesson. Lastly, new teachers are assigned a mentor, attend processional development sessions on the Danielson Framework for Instruction, engage in learning walks with school leaders, and collaborate with colleagues on lesson planning and student engagement strategies. Teachers are held accountable for these expectations via the observation process.

- School leaders and staff work collaboratively during planning sessions establishing a culture of professionalism that results in success in teaching and learning across the school. During weekly cycles of professional development, teachers collaborated with one another on planning lessons that are centered on the school's instructional focus of student engagement. Teachers present lessons to one another for feedback and facilitate professional learning sessions on Fundations, vertical alignment of reading and math standards, and strategies for planning an engaging lesson. Mutual accountability is established through rounds of teacher intervisitations wherein teachers provide one another with warm and cool feedback in alignment with the school's instructional focus of student engagement.

- Teachers and other staff members have set structures such as high school and college counseling by articulating high expectations; thus leading to student progress towards mastery of Common Core Learning. During the student meeting, students described what it meant to be college and career ready. Students mentioned two distinct programs that highlighted the achievement of men and women who are leaders in their respective fields. Students talked about hearing from an Ivy League admissions counselor, a senator, doctors and an engineer. The speakers articulated the trajectory of their careers and were former residents of the community, which fostered a sense of empowerment. A student commented that as a result of this experience, he wants to pursue a career in engineering. As a college access for all school, students worked with a liaison to visit local and Ivy League colleges to observe college life. Lastly, students discussed their next educational steps such as getting ready for high school by taking the Algebra I class and accompanying Regents exam. Results from the 2017-2018 Common Core Algebra I Regents exam showed an eighty-two percent passing rate and mastery rate of thirty-two percent.
Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use scaffolds and strategies to foster student-to-student discourse; however, the strategic use of scaffolds and extensions has yet to be implemented.

Impact

Student discussions and work products reflect high levels of thinking and participation, but there were missed opportunities to demonstrate ownership of student learning. Multiple entry points into the lesson were apparent for English Language Learners and students with disabilities, but extensions for high-achieving students were not apparent.

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, teachers consistently use manipulatives, graphic organizers and visuals to ensure that all learners, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities, were engaged in challenging tasks; however, there were missed opportunities for extensions to the lesson to address the needs of high-achieving students. In a third-grade Integrated Co-teaching (ICT) mathematics class the learning target stated, “I can use doubles to multiply by 8.” Students deconstructed their problem of the day using a problem-solving scaffold that instructed them to organize their facts by annotating the word problem. Students explained their strategy for solving the assigned problem; however, some students had already completed the task and were ready for more challenging problems. In a fourth-grade English Language Arts (ELA) class, students revised the leads on their writing drafts with the support of a graphic organizer embedded with visuals. Students provided warm and cool feedback to the peers on their leads; however, extensions for high-achieving students on receiving warm and cool feedback were not evident.

- Consistent use of scaffolds was incorporated into the lessons, however there were missed opportunities to provide strategic scaffolds and extensions into tasks so that all learners would have access to challenging tasks. In a sixth grade mathematics class, students were solving real world problems that involved division of fractions. Students had access to differentiated scaffolds that included visuals for ELLs and variances in vocabulary. Due to the pacing of the lesson, some students completed the assigned tasks and needed extensions to the task to ensure rigor and engagement. In a bridge first- and second-grade ELA class, during an independent reading task, students were charged with making a prediction about their text. Although students had a scaffold that directed them to make a prediction, a strategic scaffold that is applicable to the independent reading task was not evident; therefore, contributing to missed opportunities to extend the activity for all learners.

- Students engaged in student-to-student discourse reflected high levels of thinking and participation; however, students inconsistently articulated their next steps, thus hindering the ownership of student learning. In a first-grade science class, students were tasked with describing the phases of matter from a solid to a liquid. In their groups, using sentence starters, visually embedded scaffolds, and materials, students engaged in discussions by substantiating why their substance was a liquid and the changes in state of matter from a solid to a liquid. In a kindergarten mathematics class, the learning target required students to use matching and counting strategies to compare sets with the same number of objects. Students engaged in some discussions and were able to explain the goal of the activity; however, students were unable to articulate their next steps in their trajectory for learning, thus unaccountable for the ownership of their learning.
### Additional Finding

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

Across content areas, pacing calendars, curriculum maps, and lesson plans were aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrated multiple instructional shifts. Curricula and academic tasks emphasize rigorous habits through the restating the question, answering the question, citing the source, and explaining their responses (RACE) protocol for citing and using evidence.

#### Impact

Curricula and academic tasks are assessable to all learners and embed the Common Core and Next Generation Standards to ensure coherence and college and career readiness for all students.

#### Supporting Evidence

- Pacing calendars, curriculum maps and lesson plans across the content areas are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards, and integrate the instructional shifts. In the case of mathematics, in addition to Common Core alignment and the mathematical practices, curricular documents show a crosswalk between the Common Core and the Next Generations Standards domains and clusters. In English Language Arts (ELA) the shifts of focus across the grades are the balance of fiction and non-fiction, staircase of complexity through reading complex texts, and citing textual evidence orally and through writing. Kindergarten through second-grade students receive phonemic support through the Fundations program and a school-created reading curriculum informed by the Teachers College Reading and Writing Program. In mathematics, the shifts of focus are coherence, conceptual understanding, and an infusion of academic vocabulary through literacy, thus building coherence and promoting college and career readiness for all students.

- Curricula and academic tasks consistently emphasize higher-order skills for English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities. In a fourth- and fifth-grade bridge ELA lesson plan, ELLs and students with disabilities learned how to use the intonation of their voice when reading and how it is used to convey feelings of the character. Students received verbal supports and grade-level phonics skill development for words containing er, or, sh, and th. Students engaged in a role playing activity known as the sage and scribe in preparation for a play. As a sage, students showed one another how to use accurate intonation. As a scribe, students used a checklist to assess the accuracy of intonation, punctuation, and context clues when reviewing scenes from the play, “Two Bear Cubs.” An ELA lesson plan for grades three through five required students to provide one another with warm and cool feedback on their leads for their written memoirs. Students utilized differentiated graphic organizers for ELLs and students with disabilities that incorporated visuals, and different ways to represent their writing by including pictures. Students were provided reading supports that enlisted strategies such as RACE. Supports allowed all learners to have access to the tasks.

- A sixth-grade math lesson plan infused real-world applicability through the division of fractions to determine how much of an ingredient was needed to bake cupcakes. Supports for ELLs and students with disabilities included differentiated scaffolds with visual supports, differentiated student groups based on ability, and materials in student’s native language, Spanish. Similarly, a third-grade lesson plan required students to break eight apart into doubles to multiply by eight. Supports for ELLs included support sheets with visual representations of the word problems, resource folders with multiplication strategies, and discussion prompts, thus providing all readers access to the tasks.
Additional Finding

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

Findings

Student work is assessed with rubrics that include feedback. Teachers use varied checks for understanding such as conference notes and student trackers, with opportunities for self and peer assessment.

Impact

Feedback to students is actionable and some students reported using the feedback in different subjects. Teachers conference with students and employ mid-lesson interruptions to check for understanding so that all students’ learning needs are met.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers used strategies such as conferencing with students, conference notes, student self-assessment, and student trackers to check for understanding while making adjustments to the lesson to meet the needs of all students. In a second-grade mathematics class, student used multiple strategies such as, but not limited to, base ten blocks and expanded form to write three-digit numbers. Students used whiteboards to demonstrate their thinking while the teacher charted student responses. The teacher initiated a mid-lesson interruption based on answers on students’ whiteboards. The teacher allowed a student to demonstrate the use of a place value chart to display their answer based on student answers on their whiteboards, thus serving as a form of peer assessment. In a seventh-grade ELA class, students engaged in peer editing their colleague’s conclusions of their memoirs. Through a review of student work, the teacher noticed students were struggling with their conclusions, and started a turn-and-talk for students to clarify what they learned regarding the types of conclusions. Student also used a checklist for story ending to peer-evaluate their classmates’ work. ELLs and students with disabilities were given Post-Its with feedback on how to assess their work, thus meeting the needs of all students.

- In a fourth-grade ELA class, students provided their colleagues with warm and cool feedback on writing leads for their essays. The teacher conducted a mid-lesson interruption to have students review the differences between warm and cool feedback. Students utilized a checklist to peer-evaluate their colleague’s lead on their essays. In a first-grade science class, the teacher conferenced with individual students to determine their understanding of the phases of matter. The teacher placed a Post It-note on a student’s work that included a model for a response, “I noticed it was the same because it’s red.” However, there were no mid-lesson interruptions to take the pulse of the lesson and to ensure all students learning needs were met.

- Across classrooms, student work is assessed with rubrics that provide students with actionable feedback regarding their achievement. During the student group meeting, all students attested that the feedback received from teachers has allowed them to improve upon their work and use rubrics and Post-Its to communicate what their next steps are, thus making the feedback actionable. Students also reported that the feedback they receive in ELA is used in their social studies and math classes. On a sample of a student’s math work the student was commended for using a step in the mathematical strategy to evaluate their work such as: setting up a plan, organizing the facts, lining up the plan, verifying the plan, and evaluating the results (SOLVE); the teacher also asked the student to further evaluate the work by writing a statement to justify their work. In an ELA student work sample, the student was commended for their writing but was recommended to match their picture with their words.
Findings
Feedback to teachers captures strengths and next steps that are aligned to the school's instructional focus of student engagement. School leaders use observation data to plan professional development as well as develop succession plans for teachers.

Impact
Expectations for instruction are articulated to teachers via feedback on observations and informal walk-throughs to implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection.

Supporting Evidence

- Feedback to teachers is accurately captured through observations of classroom practices that are aligned to the school's instructional focus of student engagement and the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. A review of observation reports revealed a teacher being commended for providing opportunities for students to engage in discussions with one another, but was recommended to provide a discussion protocol for all students to fully engage in discussion. Another observation report recommended a revision of questions posed during the lesson to hold students more accountable for their learning. The overall Measure of Teacher Practice (MOTP) for engagement showed that teachers were eighty-six percent Highly Effective and Effective.

- An additional review of observation reports showed an overall trend of teachers receiving feedback about maximizing student engagement in their lessons. Observation reports cited the need to refine the line of questioning in lessons to foster more student-to-student discourse. In addition, observation reports also mentioned the employing of turn-and-talks throughout the lesson to allow students to engage in conversations that deepened their understanding of content while holding them accountable for their learning. As a result of the feedback, the overall MOTP for questioning and discussion showed that teachers were eighty-five percent Highly Effective and Effective.

- School leaders utilize individual observation data and teacher’s overall MOTP scores to effectively design and facilitate professional development. The professional learning plan revealed content-specific grade-level team collaboration to create and critique lesson plans with an instructional focus on student engagement. School leaders also utilize this data to formulate succession plans for teachers. For example, based on the observation data a teacher was appointed as a Special Education Liaison and has transitioned to a Peer Collaborative Teacher whose practice can serve as an instructional model and whose classroom is designated as a lab site.
Findings

Teachers on vertical teams engage in structured professional collaborations by reading professional literature and reviewing student work and instructional strategies. Distributed leadership practices such as the Peer Collaborative Teacher, and program liaisons are embedded in the school.

Impact

Teacher teamwork on reviewing curricula and teaching strategies has resulted in coherence and strengthening teacher capacity through the school wide adoption of RACE and SOLVE. Teacher voice is integral in the school through leadership opportunities that have supported students in high school level courses and pathways to college admission.

Supporting Evidence

- A vertical mathematics team was observed engaging in inquiry-based structured collaborations that sought to review language misconceptions in math classes, expand the word bank, plan lessons with language in mind, and review student work with a focus on language. A teacher facilitated the meeting and led a conversation about the word “sum” versus “some” and intentionality of when to use the word by displaying a sample of student work. Teachers referred to an article entitled, “Weigh to Go” about using words in context during math instruction. A teacher demonstrated to the group the use of images from a student’s ELA classes to make the words come alive for the student. A teacher also shared a SOLVE graphic organizer in order for students to visually see how each step of SOLVE works. Teachers devised next steps such as consulting literature that delineates other strategies to support language besides visuals, and to address the wondering of, “Can a picture take away from the rigor of the task?” As a result of these collaborations, teacher capacity has been strengthened by sharing best practices. Teachers commented that the team allows for the sparking of ideas for instruction through teacher collaboration and reviewing the critical standards for each grade, thus adding to their tools of knowledge. Teachers also talked about the coherence for problem solving through the school wide strategy of SOLVE and how it looks different in each grade across the school.

- A review of ELA and math teacher team notes showed that teachers meet weekly to discuss student work and data. The ELA team analyzed the June 2018 instructional reports and identified Common Core Standards for focus for each grade such as but not limited to word meaning, point of view, and evaluating an argument. As a result of this collaboration, teachers have embedded scaffolds in the curricula to support vocabulary acquisition, and adopted a school-wide strategy use of RACE. A reading-support scaffold was created by the group and is used by all teachers across the grades and is a resource used by all students to support their answers for short responses. Similarly, a vertical mathematics team analyzed the June 2018 instructional reports and identified the critical Common Core Standards for each grade. This also led to the restructuring of the mathematics curriculum and pacing calendars by incorporating the Next Generation Standards and supplementing the curriculum with Eureka Math. The work of the math team has led to a learning trajectory that outlines goals for each grade that dovetails with the restructuring of the curriculum.

- Distributed leadership structures are embedded so that teachers play an integral role in decisions across the school. Teachers serve in roles such as College Access for All Liaison whose role is to expose students to the steps required for college admission and resulted in visiting local colleges and an Ivy League college. An Algebra for All liaison ensures that concepts in Algebra are infused in math curricula starting in grade six and culminating in grade eight in preparation for the Algebra I Regents exam. Lastly, a Peer Collaborative Teacher serves as a support for teachers, with the teacher’s classroom designated as a lab site for teachers to observe instructional strategies. These structures affect student learning as teachers observe best practices, and students are prepared for college and career.