Quality Review Report

2018-2019

P.S. X014 Senator John Calandra
Elementary 08X014
3047 Bruckner Boulevard
Bronx
NY 10461

Principal: Ira Schulman

Dates of Review:
March 28, 2019 - March 29, 2019

Lead Reviewer: Elsa Kortright-Torres
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. X014 Senator John Calandra serves students in grade K through grade 5. You will find information about this school, including enrollment, attendance, student demographics, and data regarding academic performance, at http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/tools/report/default.htm.

School Quality Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To what extent does the school...</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>Area of Celebration</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>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 Culture

**To what extent does the school...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<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>Additional Finding</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 Focus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement

**To what extent does the school...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<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>
</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>
</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>
</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>
</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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings

Curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and strategically integrate the instructional shifts. Rigorous habits and higher-order skills are emphasized in curricula and academic tasks.

Impact

Common Core alignment, an emphasis on reading non-fiction, and using textual evidence to support arguments support college and career readiness skills and creates curricular coherence across grades. Emphasis on rigorous habits and higher-order skills requires that all students demonstrate their thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and faculty ensure adherence to the workshop model and are in the third year of using the Teachers College Reading and Writing Program (TCRWP) for ELA. Teachers also use supplementary curricula that emphasize phonics and phonemic awareness for kindergarten to grade two and for students with disabilities. In math, the school follows the National Training Network (NTN) Key Elements for Mathematical Success to supplement their core Envisions program. In science and social studies, teachers use DOE-approved curricula for kindergarten through grade three. For science, grades four to five curricula are aligned to Next Generation Science Standards. A review of curricula shows there is alignment to the Common Core Learning Standards and that the instructional shifts are strategically integrated. For instance, school faculty ensure a balance of reading materials with more non-fiction texts to support building knowledge in all disciplines and writing from sources. There is also an emphasis as evident in unit plans of students having opportunities for discussions using textual evidence. Curricula, as stated by teachers and school leaders, promote college and career readiness for all students.

- In a third-grade ELA unit, the lesson rationale is to provide explicit instruction on how to plan for extended response essays by rereading and annotating evidence in the text. A lesson plan calls for the teacher to conduct small-group lessons and model the use of a checklist for students to plan essays with strong supporting details and evidence. In a grade four and five math lesson plan, the teacher will model the use of Study the problem, Organize the facts, Line it up, Verify the problem, and Examine your answer (SOLVE) strategy. In a grade-five science lesson plan students are to sort pictures of earth’s major systems, geosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere, and biosphere and then conduct a jigsaw activity as they read about each system and share out with a group. In a social studies grade-three lesson plan, the teacher plans to introduce the Question Formulation Technique to help students think about an artifact, image, or document, create open-ended questions, and think about their learning as they read about different topics. A review of curricula shows coherence of teaching metacognitive strategies such as SOLVE, reading, and writing in the content areas to promote college and career readiness for all students.

- A grade-four unit on the American Revolution, emphasizes rigorous habits such as analyzing perspectives to engage in a debate. Supports are in place for English Language Learners (ELLs) such as explicitly teaching academic vocabulary, chunking the text to allow students to stop while reading a section and consider what’s important and think aloud about the information. Students with disabilities and ELLs will also have the mentor text read to them and pay attention to information that answers who, where, and when to gain a deeper understanding. In a first-grade math lesson plan, students are charged with solving word problems using the SOLVE strategy. Some students will receive explicit instruction on using SOLVE with various difficult to easier numbers depending on students’ needs. Higher-order skills such as analyzing information are emphasized across grades and subjects so that students demonstrate their thinking.
Findings

School leaders and staff consistently communicate high expectations to families via an online program, phone calls, schoolwide meetings, and parent/teacher meetings. Teacher teams and staff establish a culture for learning that consistently provides support and communicates high expectations for all students.

Impact

Clear expectations and ongoing feedback help families understand their children’s progress but have yet to reflect partnering with families to support college and career readiness. While there are some practices such as weekly reflection forms that students complete, this practice has yet to be systematically implemented in the school.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders communicate high expectations to families via parent association meetings, School Leadership Team (SLT), and in schoolwide meetings. For example, in the beginning of the school year, school leaders hold a meeting for parents to inform them of schoolwide expectations about the Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS) program, curricula, state assessment data, and extracurricular and after-school programs available for all students. Parents interviewed stated that they receive communication from the school frequently through the use of an online program, emails, and phone calls. A parent shared that there has been one workshop provided for parents of lower-grade students about how to help their students with reading. There is also evidence that the school informs parents of their grading policy in writing which is translated into Spanish.

- Parents appreciate that school leaders are approachable and help them when concerns arise. In grades three to five, though there is an expectation for teachers to have students communicate their learning goals and what they have learned in a weekly communication for their parents called “The Week in Review.” Parents stated that they do not receive it consistently. Parents also stated that they feel welcomed and that there are opportunities for volunteering in the cafeteria and after-school. Parents stated and all agreed that there should be more exposure to college and career readiness opportunities for students such as having more classroom trips and schoolwide events to prepare students for middle school and beyond. While one workshop and a schoolwide meeting in the beginning of the school year that was helpful for parents to understand expectations around behavior and academics, there is not enough evidence that the school successfully partners with families to support student progress toward expectations.

- Throughout the school, there are college banners on the school walls, current student work displays, and posters that encourage learning habits. Teachers post in the hallways and classrooms what good readers, writers, scientist and mathematicians do. In addition, the school dedicated a wall to portraits of famous historical figures such as former Presidents and Supreme Court Justices and their quotes. Students shared that they receive ongoing guidance from their teachers and grade-five students meet with guidance counselors. In addition, students feel that changing classes in the upper grades prepares them to be independent and ready for the demands of middle school. However, they felt that there should be more trips to local high schools to learn about high school expectations. All students interviewed shared their current reading level and added that they know what to do to prepare for the next level because they have student work portfolios and meet with teachers. Though some students in grades three to five spoke about “The Week in Review,” not all students knew about it and one student said that it goes out once a month.
**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**

The vast majority of classrooms reflect teaching practices that are aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and the school’s belief of how students learn best, which is to use the workshop model with gradual release to prepare students to be independent learners.

**Impact**

All student work products reflect high levels of student thinking, participation, and ownership.

**Supporting Evidence**

- In a grade-three Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) classroom, the teacher conducted a whole-class mini lesson on answering extended response questions from the New York State ELA Assessment. There was an anchor chart projected on the interactive board with three steps to help students plan an extended response to a prompt. After reading the prompt, the teacher asked questions to get students to think about what the prompt is asking them to do and look for details in the text to answer each part of the prompt. The teacher modeled how to underline details in the text which students had read before and had a copy in front of them. Two students worked with another teacher on the same learning target with differentiated text. The teacher asked students to find details to support the claim that the character was excited. After one student answered, the teacher asked, “Thumbs up or down if you agree or disagree.” Students were released to work in partnerships to find more details in the text by using a teacher-made list of codes to annotate the text. Similarly, in a grade-five classroom, the teacher arranged students by groups as they rotated to complete a task posted on a table tent which had students find relevant evidence to support answers to different questions. Students annotated, used a graphic organizer, and talked about the text using accountable talk. The teacher circulated and provided feedback as needed.

- In a grade-three and four self-contained service classroom the teacher had students use SOLVE to plan and record their thinking process to come up with the answer to the problem. Students wrote their responses and used sentence starters to talk to each other about the problem and a rubric to self-assess their work. In a grade-four classroom the teacher was also teaching about using the SOLVE strategy by having students rotate through different problems and use a checklist. A student shared that the checklist helps them to do the work on their own or with a partner. It also reminds them that there are different ways to solve a word problem. In a grade-one classroom students used the same strategy, had base ten blocks to solve a problem, and a self-assessment checklist which students used to check off as they worked on each step. In a grade-five science class, students worked in groups to discuss and classify natural objects by their natural properties and categorize them by earth systems such biosphere, hydrosphere, and atmosphere. Across the vast majority of classrooms, students have opportunities to work independently after mini lessons are conducted and have materials to support their learning.

- A review of student work products across the vast majority of classrooms illustrate that students are appropriately challenged with rigorous tasks as evident in the high levels of student thinking, participation, and ownership during lessons. Students own their learning as they complete self-assessment checklists, rubrics, and reflections. In a grade-one classroom, the student checked off all the criteria for lining up a plan of the SOLVE strategy and the word problem sheet matched the criteria. For example, for “I put a box around the clue words,” the student put a box around the words more and greatest. In a grade-three classroom the teacher modeled how to analyze images such as ancient structures and come up with an open-ended question. Students wrote their questions on Post-its as the teacher circulated and asked students to explain their thinking.
Additional Finding

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

Findings

Teachers use or create assessments, rubrics and grading policies that are aligned with the school's curricula and offer a clear portrait of student mastery. Teachers’ assessment practices consistently reflect the varied use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

Impact

Assessment practices provide actionable and meaningful feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement. Teachers’ use of varied checks for understanding allows them to make effective adjustments to meet all students’ learning needs, ensuring they are aware of their next steps.

Supporting Evidence

- In a grade-three writing assignment in which students had to write an article, a student received actionable feedback on a rubric. In addition to using the rubric, the teacher wrote an extensive comment that includes what the student did well such as including interesting facts, sub-headings and what the student can do next time, “Make sure to elaborate on your opinions and use key vocabulary terms.” During an interview with a representative sample of students, a student shared that when writing the first draft, the student received feedback from the teacher to use sentence starters and provide evidence, which helped the student to receive a better grade with the final draft. A grade-four student shared that the teacher provided feedback about using the SOLVE strategy to solve word problems. The student looked at the anchor chart and was able to go back to the work and improve the grade. Students shared that teachers provide actionable feedback that helps them understand how they are doing and improve their grades.

- A grade-five student wrote about the Civil Rights movement; the feedback was that more relevant details were needed. The student conducted more research and wrote the final draft for which he received a four, the highest rating. Another student in third grade had to conduct an investigation of whether zoos are harmful for animals. On a TCRWP rubric the teacher provided feedback that the student had written a great introduction to get the audience thinking and that the next steps would be to put information into his own words and write about what was learned. One grade-five student reported, “If I get a three, it is considered mid-level, and I know if I explain more, I will get a five, so that's what I did.” Across the vast majority of classrooms, there are bulletin boards with student work that is graded using rubrics, teacher feedback that shows areas of strength and next steps. Displayed work included multiple drafts along with the final draft, reflecting students’ application of the teachers’ feedback on earlier drafts of the same work.

- Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers confer with students and use checklists and rubrics, differentiated for ELLs and students with disabilities, as tools of self-assessment. In a grade-three class, the teacher noticed that two students seemed to be struggling with discussing how the character’s mood had changed in the text. The teacher came over to the students and modeled how to annotate by underlining one detail and writing the number one next to the sentence. The teacher asked for another detail and the student was able to point to an important detail. In a multi-grade-level self-contained math class, students used a checklist and a rubric to check their work. Students worked in groups determined by assessment data. The teacher checked a student’s checklist and asked the student to explain why he multiplied. The student realized that the operation that was needed was division and proceeded to solve and check the answer. The student proceeded to write in the last step of the strategy that he solved the problem by dividing and checked his answer by multiplying. Both examples show that students are aware of their next steps as a result of the checks for understanding and self-assessments.
Findings

School leaders support teacher development with frequent classroom observation cycles. Prompt written feedback captures teachers' strengths, challenges, and next steps using the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*.

Impact

Frequent classroom visits result in written feedback for teachers that makes clear the expectations for teacher practice and the supports available to help teachers meet them.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders conduct frequent classroom observations and provide feedback utilizing the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Each rated item is supported with specific detailed evidence from the observed class to support the rating. Next steps for teaching improvements are included throughout the class-specific evidence directed to specific categories of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and at the close of each observation report. For example, a school leader stated in an Advance report that the teacher grouped students and provided a checklist to use the SOLVE strategy. In the component on using questioning and discussion techniques, the school leader suggested that the teacher have table tents with specific guided questions to help students share responses and compare their problems to other groups' problems to have more robust math conversations. In another report, the school leader highlighted strengths, areas of focus and next steps. The teacher was provided with feedback indicating an area of success, that the teacher provided supports for students, and students were engaged, and an area of focus in which the school leader suggested that the teacher provide opportunities for students to respond to each other's work by conducting a gallery walk.

- The cycle of observations requires that teachers are observed four times a year. An area of focus is using questioning and discussion techniques, based on the latest Advance ratings which showed that it is the lowest-rated component of Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. School leaders stated that to support teachers, they keep a tracker with comments after each observation to ensure that they check back with teachers and provide them with support and have clear expectations. For example, in an observation report after a teacher had receiving training, the school leader complimented the teacher on the use of the TCRWP Progressions and using checklists for students to self-assess. In another report, the teacher was rated developing in using questioning and discussion techniques. The school leader provided evidence that students were not having conversations about what they were learning using any type of protocol. The school leader suggested that the teacher model a discussion protocol and that in a few weeks he would return to the class to observe. The teacher was observed again and received a rating of effective in this component as he used different questions to promote discussion among students. These examples illustrate that school leaders articulate specific expectations and provide the necessary supports for teachers aligned to Danielson *Framework for Teaching*.

- A teacher reported that she received specific feedback about teaching practices that was valuable. For example, the teacher appreciated the time spent after the observation to discuss strengths, areas of focus and next steps. The teacher was provided with articles to read on the use of protocols in the classroom and to try to have kindergarten students peer assess by using stickers or dots. The teacher stated that she implemented this suggestion in the classroom and has been successful especially during partner work. All teachers interviewed stated that resources are provided as attachments to their reports, PD, and links to internet resources that are useful and support their development.
**Additional Finding**

### Quality Indicator: 4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development

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<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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**Findings**

The vast majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based collaborations that ensure the implementation of the Common Core across grade levels and content areas and build instructional coherence. Teacher teamwork aligns with the school leaders’ goals, promoting professional growth and improvement in student achievement.

**Impact**

The increased instructional capacity resulting from teacher team inquiry has strengthened and improved teachers’ pedagogy, positively affecting student learning across grades and content areas and increased the number of students meeting proficiency on common grade level and New York State (NYS) assessments.

**Supporting Evidence**

- The vast majority of teachers are engaged in inquiry work using the Looking at Student Work (LASW) protocol. Teachers focus on a problem of practice and alignment of the Common Core Learning Standards to the curricula to ensure schoolwide coherence of practices. For instance, a grade-one inquiry team met to ensure that a group of students show evidence of remaining on topic through drawings and writing events in sequential order. Teachers realized that students needed to understand the concept of details, so they prepared lessons to teach students the touch and tell protocol. Teachers tracked student progress by conducting small group lessons and conferencing. All students showed improvement on the post assessment.

- The vast majority of teachers are engaged in frequent inquiry-based professional collaborations. Teachers identify a problem of practice and determine next steps to improve pedagogy and make revisions to curricula. The work products generated by the collaborative teacher teams, such as curriculum maps, lesson plans, unit plans, pacing calendars, and student materials, are shared at grade-level meetings. Support staff and general education teachers reported that significant time is allotted for co-planning with the teachers that they co-teach with, making it easier to support the ELLs, students with disabilities, students in need of intensive intervention, and students who can be accelerated. Teachers further reported that grade level meeting time is also used to embed common literacy practices into the curricula across grades and content areas to build coherence. For example, teachers increased the amount of time spent on teaching phonics to improve fluency and as a result, students increased their benchmark percentage by 25 percent. Teachers overwhelmingly agreed that the teacher team collaboration and professional learning time have improved their professional practice as well as student achievement levels.

- A teacher team showed how to increase their instructional capacity during their collaboration to improve students’ achievement on the third-grade New York State Assessment. The teachers went through three previous cycles of inquiry in which they had developed small-group lessons to help students differentiate between relevant and irrelevant details and use textual evidence to support claims in their responses to questions. All teachers in the team decided to use the answer, detail, detail (ADD) strategy and have students highlight specific sentences and teach them how to cite where evidence is found in the text. According to teachers, the use of common instructional practices in the school has provided coherence so that all students increase their achievement in benchmark assessments and high-stakes tests. In second grade, students increased their informational writing averages by one or two levels as compared to their baseline. In the Measures of Student Learning data (MoSL). Students improved from September to January by nine percent. Student achievement has increased steadily for all students in ELA, math, and science according to NYS Assessment data and the school’s benchmark data.