Quality Review Report

2018-2019

P.S. 093 Albert G. Oliver
Elementary 08X093
1535 Story Avenue
Bronx
NY 10473

Principal: Jonathan Kaplan

Dates of Review:
May 22, 2019 - May 23, 2019

Lead Reviewer: Daniel Kim
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. 093 Albert G. Oliver serves students in grade PK 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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To what extent does the school...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</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 Focus</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>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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### School Culture

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

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

### Systems for Improvement

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</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>Area of Celebration</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

Teacher teams, such as grade, cross-grade inquiry and the instructional cabinet, systematically analyze student work products to adjust key elements of teacher work including the schoolwide instructional focus of using assessment in instruction. Distributed leadership structures are embedded through these team structures.

Impact

The work of teacher teams results in shared improvements in instructional practice and mastery of goals for groups of students. Teachers play an integral role in key decisions that impact student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- As part of a six-week cycle grade four and five teachers meet in cross-grade inquiry to analyze student reading behaviors and levels of performance. Teachers come prepared to the meeting having already conducted running records for each of their students, analyzed student performance on the schoolwide online literacy assessment tool, and articulated on student cards prioritized skills needed to master to progress to the next level. Teachers within the meeting then identify interclass and intergrade trends and patterns such as the need to build student skills on identifying themes, author’s purpose and/or decoding. Teachers then access various research-based literacy skill-building reference books to collectively create strategy teaching points, guided reading groups and other plans for small group instruction for bands of reading levels. They collaboratively create goals for the teacher team to implement, measure and discuss by the following inquiry team meeting. Such teacher team work promotes the achievement of the schoolwide instructional focus of using assessment in instruction, and strengthening the capacity of teachers.

- Inquiry across the school is resulting in increased mastery for groups of students. For example, year-long notes and minutes from the kindergarten teacher team show a focus on improving early-grade literacy skills, including improving phonemic awareness, letter-sound correspondence, and word automaticity through sight words. Notes further detail identified patterns such as student inconsistencies with two phoneme and three phoneme words, plans for new initial sound consonants, and goal setting for groups of students to stretch the number of sight words that they can apply in their reading. Artifacts from this teacher team include weekly student progress monitoring, plans for interventions for targeted students, which articulate measurable goals, specific strategies and materials to achieve those goals, as well as dates and times a staff member would work with this student. Such inquiry has led to student progress in mastery of high frequency words from the start to the date of the review. At the start of the year, 10 percent of students in kindergarten and first grade were at or above grade standards; by the most recent assessments, 75 percent were performing at or above grade standards.

- Distributive leadership structures are embedded in the protocols of the school as various teams make key instructional decisions. For example the instructional cabinet, composed of representative teachers from across the grades, and administrators, meet consistently to examine student data to make instructional changes. Utilizing New York State test data, running records and online literacy assessments, they noted that students across grades were struggling in their mastery of phonics and phonemic awareness and thus hampering their reading comprehension. The team determined this to be the problem of practice for this school year. Such focus to support student decoding, fluency and phonics skills was evident in classroom observations and plans across grades during this review. Effective teacher leadership is furthered by peer facilitation of professional development around the problem of practice.
Area of Focus

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

Findings

Across grades and subject areas curricula consistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills, such as constructing explanations on how forces interact between two objects or synthesizing research to create public service announcements,. Curricula and academic tasks are planned and refined using in-class student work and benchmark assessment data.

Impact

While a diversity of learners, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities, have access to the curricula and tasks cognitively engage them, there are missed opportunities to plan for groups of students who are at mastery or above to further their higher order thinking skills.

Supporting Evidence

- Plans for a kindergarten science lesson called for students to identify and demonstrate that forces happen between two objects by using a variety of physical manipulatives as manipulatives for exploration and investigation. Students were to be guided in constructing their own explanations based on their investigations and adding their noticing to the whole-group ‘What We Know About Forces’ chart. Planned strategies evident for a grade five social studies lesson include students working in groups to synthesize what they know about a human rights issue to create public service announcements (PSAs) as a form of persuasive writing. Students were to examine sample PSAs to discuss the message, determine the intended audience, and identify the most powerful words that would convince and inform the reader of the challenge. Culminating tasks included presenting their PSAs to their peers to give and receive feedback.

- Some lesson plans included purposeful curricula extensions for students who were already performing at a high level. For example, lesson plans for a kindergarten English Language Arts, (ELA), lesson included students working in centers to practice their reading. Each center had differentiated strategies for groups of students, including ELLs and students with disabilities. Specific strategies included utilizing a picture walk to preview a Fountas and Pinnell level A text, identifying initial sounds in unfamiliar words, and/or practicing writing sight words. For two groups of students at or above grade-level benchmarks based on their reading levels, planned activities included working with partners to retell a shared text and summarize in writing, or analyze how a character’s feelings change over the course of the story by providing supporting text-based evidence. Such planning for meaningful extensions of learning tasks was evident in some but not the vast majority of plans, thus having some students miss opportunities to further develop their higher-order thinking.

- Curricula are designed so that there is access for diverse learners by using student work, assessment data and student goals to lead the work. For example, plans for a grade three ELA lesson included purposeful groupings of students including ELLs and students with disabilities, based not only on their independent reading levels but also on specific skills and strategies that students had difficulty mastering as evidenced from student in-class work. Plans for the fluency group included using punctuation to build reading expressiveness. Planned teaching points for the reading comprehension group focused on using details and text evidence to draw conclusions about the author’s purpose. A guided reading plan for those at or above benchmarks included conducting a non-fiction reading scavenger hunt for text features to help them efficiently identify relevant information they need. However, such refinement of academic tasks based on student data for the highest achieving students was evident in some, but not the vast majority of planning documents reviewed.
Findings
Across classrooms, teaching strategies such as the use of small group strategy instruction, tiered student tasks, content, visual and language scaffolds, reflect schoolwide beliefs on how students learn best and consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula.

Impact
A variety of learners, including English Language Learners and students with disabilities, are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks and demonstrate higher-order thinking skills.

Supporting Evidence

- Teaching practices reflect the school belief that students learn best through instruction that is informed and driven by assessment practices for student learning in a risk-free environment. This belief serves as the anchor for the instructional focus on data-driven instruction, which is informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Across classrooms, teachers utilized student performance on a variety of assessments to form purposeful student groups and partnerships, identify focus strategies for small group instruction, tier student work to appropriately challenging levels, and utilize online and technology resources to provide individualized support for specific needed skills of students. For example, in a grade four English Language Arts lesson, students worked independently, in partnerships or in groups on texts at their own independent reading levels. Reflecting the teacher's use of assessment data, students focused on different strategies to hone their reading skills including analyzing story elements while the teacher conducted a small group strategy lesson on comparing and contrasting characters. English Language Learners were observed listening to grade level texts on electronic tablets to build their listening and aural comprehension skills.

- Teaching strategies, such as the use of small group strategy instruction, tiered student tasks, and visual and content scaffolds, provide multiple entry points for a variety of learners in challenging academic work. In a grade three English Language Arts (ELA) lesson, students in the Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) class worked in four groups on differentiated tasks. The two teachers each worked with a small group of learners across a range of ability levels, including students with disabilities, around a strategy instruction. One group worked on developing their skills utilizing non-fiction text features and graphics, while another focused on identifying the main idea and supporting details in non-fiction text. Two additional groups worked independently, with self-selected scaffolds and task prompts to respond to non-fiction texts at their own independent reading levels.

- During a math lesson grade five students employed differentiated task cards with specific sequences of problems, based on their mastery and performance on the previous day’s exit ticket. Students worked in partnerships to solve problems on order of operations, presented either in expression form or in word problem form. As students moved from one problem to another, one teacher conducted a re-teach on the order of operations using the Parenthesis, Exponents, Multiplication, Division, Addition and Subtraction (PEMDAS) process. Students were supported by visual and content scaffolds. Another teacher checked in with various partnerships to assess student work and identify student misconceptions.
Findings
The school uses common assessments such as the New York State test and running records to determine student progress toward goals across grades and subject areas. Across classrooms, teacher assessment practices consistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

Impact
Assessment results are used to adjust schoolwide curricula and classroom instruction, and teachers make effective adjustments to meet all student learning needs through flexible small group instruction.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and teachers use the NYS ELA and NYS math tests and curricula-based assessments to identify trends and patterns and adjust schoolwide curricula and instructional practices to support student learning. For example, school leaders and teachers within the schoolwide instructional cabinet noted that groups of students in grades three to five were struggling to make consistent growth in ELA, and that their comprehension levels were hampered by missing skills in phonics and phonemic awareness. To address this concern, school leaders and teachers focused their attention on embedding small group targeted instruction to build fluency during ELA lessons, and to build into the daily schedule a structured phonics, phonological and phonemic awareness curriculum for kindergarten to grade two classrooms. Such whole group lessons for kindergarten classes were observed during this review, and plans for similar groupings in grades three to five were evident in lessons plans reviewed.

- Plans for a grade three ELA lesson tasked students to investigate a poet’s craft of using imagery, repetition, personification and rhyme. Students were to conduct multiple reads of *Who Has Seen the Wind* by Christina Rosetti, building from reading to notice, to reading to analyze and visualize. Student reading levels were utilized to form purposeful heterogeneous partnerships to aid in student discussion and analysis, with further plans for small group instruction based on previous class performance. This task was focused on supporting targeted students around the skill of identifying figurative language, assisting in enhancing visualization of the shared text. Following the initial small group instruction, further plans for an additional small group instruction were to support a different set of students with a decoding strategy for short vowels, based on student performance on the online literacy assessment.

- Across classrooms teacher assessment practices, including student self-assessments, consistently reflect the use of on-going checks for understanding to make adjustments such as forming flexible small groups. For example, in a grade five math lesson, students worked on differentiated task cards to solve tiered order of operations math problems. Students were observed self-assessing and evaluating peer work on various stations around the room, while teachers were observed conducting conferences with pairs of students to assess student strategies for problem solving. Based on the conferences, teachers pulled groups of students to reiterate the order of operations acronym used to guide the work and for students to practice application by applying the multiplication fact scaffolds.
Additional Finding

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

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations for instruction to the entire staff through a teacher handbook, faculty conferences and teacher team meetings. School staff establish a culture for learning that systematically communicates a unified set of high expectations to all students.

Impact

Teachers share a culture of mutual accountability for meeting instructional expectations, and provide individualized guidance and focused feedback to students. From such work, students own their educational experience in preparation for the next level.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders articulate high expectations to all staff through discussions at schoolwide professional development (PD) days, faculty conferences, the teacher handbook, and individual, grade and cross-grade inquiry teacher team meetings. These individual and group meetings provide a venue so that school leaders can detail the expectations related to instruction, planning and professional collaborations. Additionally, school leaders meet regularly with teachers individually to review professional growth, the expectations for high quality teaching and learning and follow-up based on attended PD. To expand capacity in delivering effective instruction, all teachers receive feedback on their performance aligned to best practices highlighted by the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

- School leaders reinforce high expectations for instruction by providing all teachers with PD around strategies to improve their proficiency in the schoolwide instructional focus of using assessments in instruction. As members of teacher teams while collaborating to develop curriculum maps and units of study with corresponding assessments, staff are required to share student performance data for each benchmark assessment and develop corresponding action plans for small group instruction that includes scaffolds to support student access to the content. Following each teacher team inquiry meeting, teachers set collective goals for instruction and student performance that is to be met by subsequent meetings. Interviewed teachers shared that such collaboration results in a sense of shared accountability as they openly discuss their struggles and successes while offering support to colleagues around instruction. In addition, via individual and team discussions at grade and common planning meetings, staff members receive support aligned to their individual needs and interests.

- Staff members communicate expectations and feedback to students with the goal of assisting them in preparing for the next level. Through a schoolwide grading and homework policy and consistent use of project and assignment rubrics before and after units of study in each subject, students receive effective feedback, advisement and guidance for their next steps. This comes in the form of both middle school information sessions and school selection assistance meetings, to name a few. Interviewed students described how they receive feedback from peers and teachers, such as becoming less repetitive with arguments, incorporating academic vocabulary while explaining their thinking in math work and using writing craft elements such as posing a question as a hook to the reader. Students shared how feedback improves their work and helped in getting a better grade, assisted in identifying specific middle schools to attend, and aided them to articulate personal steps needed so that they can successfully transition to middle school.
Additional Finding

| Quality Indicator: 4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision | Rating: Well Developed |

Findings

School leaders and teacher peers, through inquiry and teacher teams, support development for all teachers through strategic cycles of observations and analysis of student work. Teachers receive feedback that accurately captures their strengths, challenges and outlines their next steps aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

Impact

Teachers receive feedback that articulates clear expectations for their practice that both support teacher development and aligns with individual teacher and schoolwide goals.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders strategically align grade-band walkthroughs and observations of all teachers to each administrator’s instructional expertise and the schoolwide problem of practice. For example, school leaders and teachers identified the need for more fluency, phonics and phonemic awareness instruction across the school, and deemed it the schoolwide problem of practice. To address this problem of practice, the assistant principals this year, switched their roles and responsibilities. The former lower grades assistant principal, with expertise in early literacy, now supervises and supports upper grade teachers in creating and planning for targeted, small group instruction for struggling students. The former upper grades assistant principal, with knowledge and expertise in grades three to five standards and expectations, now supervises and supports lower grade teachers as they implement a systematic phonics and phonemic awareness curricula. Teacher peers also support the development of teaching practice, thus promoting reflective practices. Using inquiry protocols, teacher teams analyze key elements of their instructional craft and set instructional and student performance goals for the team to meet. These goals are assessed and re-evaluated in subsequent meetings, and serve as the basis for colleagues to provide feedback, create next steps and offer support for each other.

- Observation reports that follow administrator visits specifically highlight student work products, quotes, and actions as part of the feedback on classroom practice. Further analysis of student work is deepened during individual data meetings. Through those meetings teachers identify patterns and trends as take-aways from each benchmark assessment for both individual and groups of students, including ELLs and students with disabilities. This analysis, which is captured in each teacher’s Action Plan and followed up in subsequent meetings with administrators, articulates particular Common Core standards to be addressed and the specific instructional moves for individual and groups of students. Such analysis of student work and data as part of feedback promotes professional growth and reflection.

- Teacher feedback around their strengths and challenges is aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching, the schoolwide instructional focus of using assessment in instruction and teacher professional goals. For example, artifacts for a teacher included individual goal setting to further hone small group instruction to reach those performing at or above grade expectations, and building a better assessment system to inform her in-class practices. An observation report at the start of the year for this teacher noted a challenge in assessment practices, with next steps to adjust the student task to better illustrate student content mastery to inform next instructional steps. A following observation report noted a growth in assessment practices with evidence of multiple in-class checks for understanding to form small group instruction for both struggling students and those performing at a high level. Such alignment between teacher goals, observation feedback and the instructional focus was consistently evident across reviewed artifacts supports teacher development and elevates schoolwide pedagogical practices.