Quality Review Report

2018-2019

The New American Academy at Roberto Clemente State Park
Elementary 09X274
275 Harlem River Park Bridge
Bronx
NY 10453
Principal: Pepe Gutierrez

Dates of Review:
March 27, 2019 - March 28, 2019

Lead Reviewer: Lenneen Gibson
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

The New American Academy at Roberto Clemente State Park 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

### Instructional Core

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></th>
<th><strong>Area</strong></th>
<th><strong>Rating</strong></th>
</tr>
</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>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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# School Quality Ratings continued

## 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>
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</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator</th>
<th>4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Findings

The vast majority of teachers in grade teams engage in inquiry based professional collaborations grounded in the school’s instructional focus of student engagement. Distributed leadership practices are embedded in the school through a number of opportunities such as the role of grade leader.

Impact

Teacher teamwork has resulted in the sharing of best practices thus impacting teachers’ instructional capacity. Teachers play an integral role in key decisions thus impacting student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- A second-grade team engaged in an inquiry-based activity that analyzed a math end-of-module assessment with a focus on the number and operations in base ten Common Core Learning Standard. Teachers used a protocol to analyze the student work to determine students’ capability for solving the problems, and planned next steps. Level 4 students solved two-step problems, used multiple strategies and understood the vocabulary used in the word problem making minor errors in counting and in their two-step problem solving process. Level 3 students demonstrated the ability to regroup and solved one-step word problems, demonstrating difficulty solving two-step problems, and borrowing from the hundredths place. Level 2 students showed strength in place value and adding two-digit numbers while demonstrating literacy issues. Lastly, Level 1 students drew the problem, and lined up the place value, but were unable to write a number sentence and solve the problem. The next steps included tools or strategies such as tape diagrams, fluency practice, using manipulatives, and reviewing number sense. As a result of the team’s weekly meetings, teachers shared best practices, incorporated the five mathematical practices from the Common Core Learning Standards into their teaching repertoire schoolwide, and established even pacing in the math lessons, thus exemplifying coherence.

- A kindergarten team engaged in teacher rounds to answer the problem of problem of practice statement, “How do we design instruction that is student-centered and child-driven?” The teachers viewed a videotaped lesson of their colleague teaching the counting and identifying of the number six. Students shared their strategy by engaging in number talks by responding to “How many?” questions. Teacher observers indicated that the teacher explored different strategies and used mathematical language such as addends. The wonderings shared were, “What improvement have you seen in student discourse?” “What is the impact on students seeing composing and decomposing in 10?” The teacher noted improvements in conversations, building fluency, and in mathematical language in the students. The impact of teacher rounds on the teachers’ instructional capacity included learning about the mathematical practices from colleagues through intervisitations and getting feedback around a problem of practice which supports pedagogical improvements to student engagement.

- Distributive leadership practices such as grade leaders, a Peer Collaborative Teacher, English as New Language (ENL) Coordinator, students with disabilities liaison, and a Master Teacher are embedded so that teachers play an integral role in student learning. The ENL Coordinator has organized students in need of intervention and supported the tracking of student data to monitor student progress. Grade leaders serve on the Educational Leadership Team (ELT) where curriculum planning decisions such as the incorporation of the five mathematical practices into lessons, and the analysis of student data is grounded in the school’s instructional focus of student engagement. This information is funneled to grade teams to actualize the work of the ELT. A teacher supports the work of teacher rounds and math professional development (PD) facilitation for the staff, thus supporting teacher practice and influencing student learning.
Findings

School leaders articulated that students learn best when there is small group instruction, checks for understanding and student-to-student discourse to ensure access to instruction through multiple entry points.

Impact

Teachers employ differentiated strategies for instruction such as using leveled texts and scaffolds, however, the use of strategic entry points to meet the needs of all learners has yet to be evidenced in the vast majority of classrooms.

Supporting Evidence

- The school's beliefs on how students learn best were evident across classrooms. In a fourth-grade math class, the learning objective required students to decompose fractions by using a fraction model. The teacher checked for understanding by listening to students during a turn-and-talk while they were discussing how to decompose two-thirds equivalently. Students used academic language among their group members and a student went to the board to demonstrate their thinking. Subsequently, the teacher pulled a small group to the rear of the classroom to work on additional problems. Students had access to extensions for the lesson. In a third-grade English Language Arts (ELA) Integrated Co-teaching (ICT) class, students looked at the ways in which characters reacted to a problem in two texts. Students in a small group used a graphic organizer to denote their character’s feelings and used context clues to discern the character’s reaction. Students throughout the class commented on their character’s reactions using two texts as a comparison.

- Students engage in appropriately challenging tasks and higher order thinking. In a second-grade ELA class, the learning objective required students to analyze story elements by tracking the challenge in the story, retell events, and predict what will happen next. Students used their leveled texts, sticky notes, and a graphic organizer to chronicle a prediction and three reasons to support the prediction. Similarly, in a first-grade ICT ELA class, students used sticky notes to denote a prediction from their leveled text; however, students did not use a differentiated graphic organizer to support the variety of learners in the classroom, thus impacting access to the task.

- In a third-grade dual language math class, students were required to place their fractions on a number line with endpoints zero and one by using a fraction strip model. Students learning English used a translated scaffold to complete the problem of the day and all students used checks for understanding cards to engage in math talks with their peers. In a kindergarten ICT class, students were tasked with decomposing the number eight using counters, number stories, and number bonds. Students manipulated Cheerios on a paper plate to show their decomposition of the number eight, although they showed signs of struggle during the lesson without differentiated access to the task. In a fifth-grade ICT class, students used close reading strategies to deconstruct a complex text. Students annotated the text but all students were reading the same text and there were missed opportunities to provide students with scaffolds to further deconstruct the text.
Additional Finding

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

Findings
Teachers integrate the Common Core instructional shifts of fluency and text complexity in their curricular documents. Teachers consistently plan rigorous habits that are exemplified in tasks across grades and subjects.

Impact
The purposeful decision to integrate the instructional shifts and incorporate rigorous academic tasks is building coherence and promoting college and career readiness for all students.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers integrate the Common Core Learning Standards, content standards and the instructional shifts into their curricular documents to build coherence while promoting college and career readiness. A review of ELA lesson plans showed such elements among others: the objective, the procedure for the workshop model of instruction, the learning target, and the assessment criteria. In addition, the lesson plans cited the instructional shift of text complexity. Math lesson plans incorporated the instructional shift of fluency and the five mathematical practices of the Common Core Learning Standards. Additionally, lesson plans cited the objective, materials required, the workshop model of instruction and in some cases, the small group intervention, assessment, and extensions for the activities.

- Curricula and academic tasks articulated rigorous habits and higher-order thinking skills. The learning target in a second grade ELA lesson tasked students with the retelling of events, making predictions and analyzing characters in the text. The task was tiered according to students’ reading levels, and required them to use additional reading strategies to access the text. A third-grade dual language mathematics task required students to compare unit fractions by reasoning about their size using inequalities signs. In alignment with the Common Core mathematical practices, students were assigned a problem of the day in their native language and student work exemplified the fifth mathematical practice of modeling to demonstrate their thinking.

- Curricular coherence through the promotion of skills needed for college and career emphasized by the integration of the instructional shifts and the Common Core was evident upon review of a number of unit plans. A second-grade ELA unit plan on the Ancient Greek Civilization showed alignment to the Common Core Learning Standard of writing informative and explanatory texts to introduce a topic. Students investigated the features of a nonfiction text to help them read the text. After reviewing features such as a table of contents, glossary, bold words, and diagram, students engaged in a nonfiction scavenger hunt to identify these features. A pre-kindergarten interdisciplinary unit plan included the essential question, “How do we travel by land?” “What community helpers help us to get around by land?” Students were read the text *Subway Ride* and compared the different forms of transportation in different places while introduced to a subway map. Scaffolds to access the text and an emphasis on key vocabulary terms were incorporated into the unit plan.
Additional Finding

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

Teachers use the Teachers College Reading and Writing Program (TCRWP) rubric to assess student work. Common assessments such as module assessments in ELA and math, as well as Fountas and Pinnell (F&P) determine student progress.

Impact

Teachers use the Grade Data Analysis and the Student Work Class Analysis summary protocol to analyze assessment data and adjust instruction and curricula. Actionable feedback to students and teachers is driven by a variety of assessments administered throughout the school year.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use module assessments in ELA and math, interim assessments, on-demand writing assessments, as well as F&P to determine student progress and utilize data to make adjustments to curricula and instruction. A second grade team analyzed a module three math assessment using the Grade Data Analysis and the Student Work Class Analysis Summary protocol. Common Core Standards of interest were operations and algebraic thinking and number operations in base ten. Based on the analysis, students were placed in Levels 1 through 4 according to their performance. Teachers noted the trends and patterns for the students within each level and devised a next step such as reviewing the converting of high tens in the curriculum. The second grade team analyzed a phonics unit and devised next steps such as re-teaching suffixes, blends, and conferring with English Language Learner (ELLs) students more than once a week. Lastly, teachers used a Student Work Class Analysis Summary protocol to look at student work for ELA as well.

- Teachers analyze various data sources such as New York State (NYS) ELA exam and F&P data in cycles to inform Academic Intervention Services (AIS) for students. Students who scored below a specific threshold (Level 2.89 – 3.19) in ELA received AIS such as the F&P leveled learning intervention. At the completion of cycle one, 56 percent of the students grew one level in their reading, 37 percent of the students grew two levels in their reading, and five percent of the students grew three levels in their reading. At the end of the second cycle, Black and Hispanic male students showed growth at 34 percent, students with disabilities demonstrated a 10 percent growth, and ELLs showed growth at six percent. In tandem with the examination of NYS ELA data, a schoolwide practice entitled, In My Opinion, Lens Evidence that supports your opinion, and So all this makes me think protocol (ILS) was instituted. An examination of the impact of ILS during the 2018-19 school year on the curriculum showed an eleven percent increase of overall class scores in ELA.

- Across classrooms, teachers use an assessment calendar to administer math and writing baselines, as well as beginning-, mid-, and end-of-year assessments in ELA and math. Actionable feedback to students is aligned to the school's curricula which incorporates a variety of assessments and tools such as the TCRWP rubric. A sample of a student's writing work assessed using the TCRWP rubric cited the student for using fun details in their writing and recommended support in punctuation and the sequencing of events their writing. Another sample of a student's writing cited a well-organized essay but support in word choice was recommended. Samples of student work on comparing fractions cited glow and grows. For example, a student received a glow for creating a story problem to compare the fractions. The grow stated that the student needed to label all the parts of the whole.
Additional Finding

<table>
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<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 communicate high expectations to the entire staff via a weekly newsletter, a staff handbook, and the use of instructional rounds. The school successfully partners with families by keeping them apprised of expectations and their child’s academic progress.

Impact

Mutual accountability for expectations are attained via teacher facilitation of PD, teacher-initiated instructional rounds and administrators’ instructional walk-throughs. A variety of workshops offered by the school for families support student progress toward expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal’s weekly newsletter provides support to teachers on close reading and the use of tools such as the Qualitative Rubric for Literacy in selecting engaging, complex, and relevant texts. The newsletter apprised the teachers of a close reading workshop that supports teachers in formulating text dependent questions. Teachers were lauded for their continuous work in instructional strategies to support growth in ENL students. The staff handbook delineated expectations for elements of an effective lesson noting clear objectives, direct instruction, active student engagement, frequent and immediate feedback on student performance, higher order thinking questions, and opportunities for student success. Teachers are held accountable for these expectations through classroom observations.

- Mutual accountability for expectations for professionalism are articulated via the PD sessions that are teacher facilitated. Sessions on schoolwide initiatives such as ILS, Guided Reading, the five mathematical practices, and instructional rounds were grounded in the Danielson Framework for Teaching components of questioning, discussion, and student engagement. Teachers new to the profession are supported in their professional practice through the work of a mentor, strategic intervisitations within and outside of the school to see examples of best practices. A collaborative log is completed by the mentor and mentee thus holding each other accountable. Mutual accountability for professionalism are attained via teacher initiated instructional rounds and instructional walkthroughs conducted by administrators.

- Families are apprised of their child’s academic performance via report cards, progress reports, emails, phone calls, written communication, weekly parent engagement meetings, and a phone application. The school website offers another layer of communication to families on how to use online platforms to continue the learning in the home. Teachers construct translated grade-specific newsletters to communicate to families what students are learning in their classes and upcoming events such as curriculum celebrations that occur every six weeks. Parents attend parent workshops such as how to implement dual language strategies to support math while at home, as well as workshops on reading strategies. Workshops such as Muffins with Mom, Donuts with Dad, and an articulation of the middle school process fosters a relationship with parents. Parents volunteer at the school for events such as trips which fosters a partnership with the families.
Additional Finding

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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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Findings

Feedback to teachers captures strengths, challenges and next steps that are aligned to the school’s instructional focus on student engagement. School leaders use evaluation data to inform PD.

Impact

Teacher feedback has resulted in teachers deemed effective in their practice thus elevating professional growth. Teacher evaluation data is used to plan PD on the schoolwide strategy of ILS and mathematical practices.

Supporting Evidence

- Upon review of a number of teacher observation reports, it was noted that the feedback provided has impacted improved pedagogy. In one report the teacher commendation cited having a clear learning objective, and students being intellectually engaged. The recommendation to the teacher was to plan for discussion in small groups first using the five mathematical practices with a range of Webb’s *Depth of Knowledge* questions in the plan. Similarly, another observation report cited teacher commendations for explicit student outcomes for the lesson and students demonstrating progress towards mastery. The next steps included having a mini-lesson to discuss and introduce mathematical strategies in order for students to perform the anticipatory task. The 2017-18 Measures of Teacher Practice showed that teachers at the school were 100 percent effective.

- Teachers also receive feedback from informal observations of their practice. A review of the written feedback cited teachers’ strengths and next steps. Commendations to a teacher cited teaching students to round in math and employed real work applications. The recommendations included the need for decisions around the grouping of students and designating roles and responsibilities within the group. Professional reading on checking for understanding and strategies to support student thinking and discussions during partner shares were provided as resources for the teacher. Another informal observation cited that the interactions between the teacher and student contributed to a positive learning environment. A next step for the teacher identified the use of assessment during instruction by conferring with students. The teacher was given a framework for effective conferring with students as professional reading on the topic thus supporting further development.

- School leaders use data from observations, assessments, and walkthroughs to inform PD. A review of these data sources lead to a series of PD sessions on the five mathematical practices and the ILS protocol to support literacy. Teacher observation data is used to determine succession plans for teachers. One example includes the progression from peer collaborative teacher, to master teacher, leading to an instructional assistant principal. There is a leadership pipeline that has been established with the Borough Field Support Center.