Quality Review Report

2019-2020

P.S. 108 Sal Abbracciamento
Elementary 19K108
200 Linwood Street
Brooklyn
NY 11208

Principal: Constance Hahn

Dates of Review:
November 20, 2019 - November 21, 2019

Lead Reviewer: Glenda Esperance
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>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</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 State standards and/or content standards</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by State standards and the 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>Well Developed</td>
<td></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>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## School Quality Ratings continued

### 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>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<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>
<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>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Observe teachers using the Danielson Framework for Teaching along with the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate schoolwide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</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 State standards</td>
<td>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>5.1 Monitoring and Revising Systems</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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</table>

Findings
School leaders and faculty have an effective and transparent process to purposefully evaluate and adjust curricular and instructional practices in response to student needs. Organizational resources, teacher teams, and teacher support and supervision practices are purposely evaluated and/or adjusted.

Impact
Consistent evaluation and adjustments increase the coherence of pedagogical practices across the school, with particular attention to the planning of differentiated instruction and teachers’ professional development (PD).

Supporting Evidence
- The effectiveness with which teachers analyze data from formative and summative assessments to inform curricular and instructional adjustments is monitored on a regular basis. From kindergarten to grade five, teacher teams meet during grade-specific, common-planning periods to adjust curricular documents based on data derived from schoolwide common assessments. The foci of teams are established in partnership with school leaders, and progress towards meeting each team’s objective is monitored over the course of the school year. Feedback offered by the principal, assistant principals, and coaches to specific grade teams shows that school leaders consistently review agendas and meeting notes that include next steps and their implications on teaching strategies. Additionally, all teachers upload their daily conferencing notes on student performance during instruction to an online community platform. This schoolwide note-taking document captures content-specific data about individual students’ academic and social performance and suggested next steps. School leaders then provide actionable feedback to teachers on their notes so that pedagogical practices can be strengthened. These systems are transparent and result in a shared approach to teaching and learning that promotes coherence across classrooms.

- All teachers complete a survey at the beginning of the year and at the end of every PD series to evaluate its effectiveness. School leaders and PD Committee members use this data to make regular adjustments to the schoolwide PD plan. In addition, members of the PD Committee monitor the success of PD initiatives through analysis of data from classroom observations and student assessments. After every observation, administrators hold a post-observation conference with teachers and ask, “What professional learning opportunity has made the greatest impact on your teacher practices?” School leaders also ask teachers to discuss the PD they believe would best meet their needs in order to improve their pedagogical strategies. As a result, adjustments have been made to the menu of PD topics from which teachers can choose. Furthermore, an updated PD calendar is emailed every week so that all stakeholders are aware of the adjustments based on the data analysis made to the plan for the upcoming week. This process has allowed school leaders to provide teachers with timely support so that pedagogical practices can be strengthened to address students’ immediate needs.

- Resource-allocation decisions designed to support the successful meeting of school goals and action plans are thoughtfully assessed by school leaders on an ongoing basis. For example, school leaders earmarked funding for three on-site staff developers to provide embedded PD, with a particular attention to planning differentiated instruction to support student mastery. Decisions are evaluated using the schoolwide “At a Glance” spreadsheet, which is compiled from multiple sources, such as running records, math curriculum module assessments, promotional-criteria requirements, attendance records, writing- and reading-level data. This data is also disaggregated to track the performance of multiple subgroups, including students who are performing in bottom third or are considered chronically absent, students with disabilities, and Multilingual Learners (MLLs). All teachers have access to the spreadsheet, which is updated weekly and emailed to staff every Friday.
Findings
Across the vast majority of classrooms, teaching practices reflect a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best. Additionally, teaching strategies such as flexible grouping consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula so all learners can participate in high-level academic tasks.

Impact
Although students were assigned to cooperative-learning student groups in all visited classrooms, they were not aware of the group assignment process. Teachers’ use of scaffolds provides accessibility to challenging tasks for a variety of learners, and the school’s small group practices ensure student involvement in the learning process. However, ownership opportunities are still limited in some classrooms.

Supporting Evidence

- In a grade-five Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) English Language Arts (ELA) classroom, students were in groups completing a specific literacy task. One group was supported by a general-education teacher for small group instruction, a second group received explicit instruction from the special-education teacher. The remaining students were divided into literature circles. As one student read the text, The Underneath, other group members took notes and answered short-response questions. Afterwards, group members swapped notebooks with their peers and made corrections to their responses using feedback from their partners for guidance. In another group, students read, Black Star Bright Dawn. Each student had an assigned role, and after reading the assigned pages, students held a discussion on their individual impressions of the pages read. Similar student groupings were observed across the vast majority of classrooms visit during the school visit. The impact of this practice can potentially be strengthened if students were aware of the purposeful decisions that went into deciding which students were assigned to which groups, which was something that multiple students were not able to articulate.

- Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers incorporate flexible grouping that offers multiple entry points to all students, including students with disabilities. In a grade-four ICT math class, students completed a task that required them to solve multi-step word problems and find whole-number quotients and remainders. One teacher conducted check-ins and monitored student progress while the other teacher worked with a small group that was reviewing steps for dividing with remainders. Students who mastered the concept were provided individualized extensions via a math software. In a grade-two science class, students were reading about weathering and identifying how different materials affect the makeup of the earth. Students were divided into groups to address the variety of learners in the room. The teacher provided supports such as sentence starters, access to a video on land changes, word banks, and opportunities for students to illustrate their understanding of the concept. The teacher posed questions and facilitated discussions among students to ensure high levels of participation.

- In a grade-five math classroom, the teacher divided student into groups to work collaboratively on multi-step word problems derived from the same learning standard. Selected students were provided with manipulatives and math formula reference sheets. Furthermore, the teacher gave MLLs a word bank and documents in Spanish to help them access pertinent vocabulary. In a third-grade ICT ELA classroom, students were working on characterization and were grouped according to their needs. Some students were practicing analyzing characters using a computer-based reading program, while other students read and took notes on an independent text. Selected students were given a character trait reference tool with a categorized word bank of terms, short response sentence starters, and a reading fluency reminders chart. These teaching strategies ensured that a variety of learners were engaged in appropriately challenging tasks.
## Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that units of study are aligned to the State standards through inclusion of text-based answers, balanced literacy, and math fluency-building activities. Curricula are refined using data to include appropriate scaffolds and differentiation strategies.

## Impact

Across grade levels, a diverse group of learners are cognitively engaged in standard-based curricula.

## Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms for all grades, literacy units engage students in rich, evidence-based conversations about text. For example, a grade-four literacy plan requires students to participate in a Socratic seminar to identify the theme of the short story “All Summer in a Day” and discuss how the setting of a story affects a character. In a grade-three unit plan, students are to write an essay expressing their opinions about humankind’s most important attempt to learn more about space. Math units are structured to build fluency and support students in acquiring a deeper understanding of math concepts. Unit plans include a variety of multi-step problems for students to demonstrate their thinking as well as use different strategies. For instance, a grade-four math lesson plan includes a task for students to answer division questions using the array or area model and to reflect on their preferred method. Across grade levels, literacy units include a balance of informational and literary texts and incorporate multiple genres, such as poetry, articles, biographies, autobiographies, and realistic fiction, to build student knowledge. Consequently, a grade-four literacy unit culminates with students’ writing an essay in which they cite evidence from multiple literary and informational texts to explain the figurative and literal meanings of the term “great heart.” As a result, curricula provide students with multiple opportunities to think critically and make fact-based decisions on an ongoing basis, promoting college and career readiness for all students.

- Curricula analysis shows that lesson plans across grades and content areas support the needs of MLLs and students with disabilities, incorporating Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) in the latter case. A fifth-grade ELA unit plan includes frequent verbal prompting, a reading tracker, sentence starters, discussion question stems, leveled readings, graphic organizers, images, and tiered work products. A second-grade social studies plan includes pictures to support vocabulary acquisition, charts, and checklists. In a grade-five math lesson, selected students receive multiplication charts and math vocabulary cards. Some students are also given modified word problems that include simplified numbers and a graphic organizer to solve multi-step questions. In a grade-three literacy class, supports include pictures, word banks, and alphabet charts as well as phonics stem prompts tailored to the needs of MLLs. Although students are given different supports, all students are to conduct a close reading of their individual texts and engage in the day’s task requiring them to focus on character’s actions. Therefore, all learners have access to standards-aligned curricula and are cognitively engaged.

- All curricular documents include evidence of tracking and adjustments made based on student data. Math unit plans are informed by weekly data tracking sheets that guide the adjustments and accommodations for ELLs and students with disabilities. For example, a grade-four lesson plan includes teacher-created activity sheets that are tiered based on student need. Literacy unit plans include leveled texts adjusted using data from reading benchmark assessments. Students will read independently while teachers target specific reading strategies. Thus, all curricular documents include evidence of tracking and refinements based on student data.

### Table: Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator</th>
<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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19K108: November 20, 2019
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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Findings
School leaders and faculty use common assessments to track student progress towards grade-level goals. Across classrooms, teachers use results from varied formative assessments, such as exit slips and tracking sheets, to make adjustments to lessons and to plan next steps for individual learners and groups of students.

Impact
Common assessment analysis and ongoing checks for understanding result in adjustments to classroom instruction, including small-group assignments, to meet the learning needs of all students.

Supporting Evidence

- All teachers use data derived from the analysis of summative and formative common assessments to support the needs of a wide range of learners. Special education teachers create SDI charts for their students with disabilities and share them with general education teachers. These personalized documents provide a summary of specific student strengths and primary areas of concern. They also include strategies to support social behaviors. Dual Language and English as a New Language teachers create individual learning profiles, using data from formal exams and classroom observations to provide detailed insights on students’ language proficiency levels and then sharing them with general education teachers. Moreover, teachers use these documents to determine the types of interventions and supports to incorporate into their lesson plans, such as glossaries, kinesthetic actives, and technology. Student progress towards grade level milestones is logged on tracking sheets and reviewed on an ongoing basis during grade level team meetings. These systems advance the faculty’s efforts to address learning gaps of students who struggle with specific aspects of the curricula.

- In ELA classes in grades kindergarten to five, running record reading assessments are administered on an ongoing basis. This data is used in classrooms to determine reading groups and identify students in need of academic support. School leaders have also used this information to create a tracker that charts progress being made by students. Additionally, across grade levels, school leaders and teachers use beginning-of-the-year, mid-year, and end-of-year common assessments to determine students’ acquisition of specific skills that inform instructional practice, student groupings, and curricular adjustments. There is also evidence of teachers using formative assessments to track student performance in math. Beginning-of-year, mid-year, and end-of-year assessments, along with mid-module and end-of-module assessments are aligned to the schoolwide math curriculum. Student performance on these assessments is logged by topic and teachers make adjustments to instruction accordingly. For example, a grade-four math unit plan and skills tracking sheet revealed that students had difficulty responding to division-based word problems. Based on this information, teachers created additional word problems and embedded them in the plan to allow students more opportunities to practice this skill. This adjustment resulted in students’ including MLLs and students with disabilities demonstrating improved mastery on a follow-assessment. Thus, common assessment analysis is used across grades and subject areas to drive curricular and instructional adjustments.

- Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers checked-in with groups of students and adjusted lessons accordingly. In a grade-five math class, the teacher checked-in with each group to clarify their misconceptions. The teacher also provided rubrics and a checklist to guide students’ next steps, including customized next steps for certain groups based on their demonstrated needs. In a grade-three ELA class, students were working in groups discussing the text “Galileo.” The teacher originally asked students to share their findings with their table mates. However, once the teacher monitored the groups and noticed students struggling with expressing themselves to their peers, she adjusted the task, eliminating the table discussions and holding a whole-class discussion about the text instead.
Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the staff through a weekly newsletter and on-going PD. Faculty establish a tone for learning that systematically communicates and supports high expectations for all students and successfully partner with families to support their children’s progress.

Impact

There is a culture of mutual accountability among school leaders and staff stemming from clear expectations and targeted PD. Faculty effectively engage parents in building a path for their children towards college and career readiness and ongoing goal setting prepares students for the next level.

Supporting Evidence

- At the beginning of the year, school leaders provide faculty with a school policy and procedures handbook to ensure that high expectations are clear to staff. School leaders have created a plan to support faculty in meeting these expectations through cycles of PD executed by curriculum staff developers and the school’s coaches. Training is provided for leadership, teachers, and paraprofessionals specific to their content or grade-level needs as a means of strengthening their craft. For example, upon review of student work and math data, school leaders and teachers determined that students were having issues with unpacking word problems across grade levels and classrooms. As a result, school leaders and staff developers hosted PD for classroom teachers related to this topic. Leaders monitor PD on an ongoing basis through the use of surveys to assess effectiveness and make adjustments. Additionally, administrators and lead teachers conduct frequent observations and confer with staff to discuss next steps and additional supports.

- At the beginning of the year, the faculty hosts a kick-off event for parents to review the parent handbook and explain academic and social expectations, including curricula that promote college and career readiness. Teachers meet with parents every Tuesday to discuss their children’s academic progress and social-emotional concerns as well as to develop plans for shared support and improvement. Parent workshops are tailored to meet the needs of the school community. School leaders survey parents, and the results are used to provide them with need-based resources that are both academically focused and interest based. For example, parents voiced their concerns about increasing student-reading opportunities out of the school building. As a result, the school established reading libraries across the community. Small libraries can be found in the local nail salon, pizza shop, laundromat, and other neighborhood stores. Students are encouraged to read at these venues when running errands with their parents, and they are rewarded for doing so with ROCKS dollars, the school’s PBIS incentive currency. Throughout the school year, parents are given updates on their children’s progress through an online platform utilized by all staff members. Teachers also send a curriculum newsletter to parents with information about the current units of study, standards being addressed, and initiatives taking place across grade levels.

- Teachers support students, providing ongoing advice as they create action plans, called road maps, of what is expected for them to reach the next level. In September, all students set their own academic and personal goals in all content areas. While helping students with their plans, teachers provide individualized tips to assist them in reaching their goals. Students are given goal binders and track their own progress on a regular basis, thus taking ownership of their learning. Students review their performance weekly and reflect on their strengths and challenges. The student binders are shared with parents during parent-teacher conferences. Across grade levels, students shared that teachers were instrumental in helping them meet their goals. One student stated, “Teachers provide us with personal toolkits… which is a folder of resources to help us with math reading and writing….They give us the tools we need to do well in these subjects.”
Findings

The vast majority of teachers engage in inquiry-based, structured professional collaborations across grade levels through lesson study. Distributed leadership structures, such as teacher-led committees, are embedded throughout the school community.

Impact

Schoolwide instructional coherence promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams work to address problems of practice in literacy and/or math on each grade level, promoting the implementation of State standards. Teachers explore research strategies to address identified gaps in student data and work. The work of each team is grounded in anchor texts read by all members. School leaders and teachers shared that this structure has supported individual professional growth and strengthened instructional coherence across the school. For example, fifth-grade teachers worked collaboratively to brainstorm possible teaching strategies to increase the level of discussion and participation among students with regard to nonfiction texts. Teachers decided to incorporate conversation stems, student self-evaluation forms, and accountable talk bookmarks, and for selected students, created discussion and guiding questions. As a result of these practices, over time students felt more comfortable participating and discussion levels increased. Teacher teams also worked to create a social studies unit incorporating elements of Socratic seminar. The document included tips and suggestions teachers could utilize to avoid the over-participation of some students and the lack of participation by others. Thus, the work of teacher teams has strengthened their instructional capacity.

- Teacher teams use an established protocol to analyze student work and provide instructional implications and next steps. During an observation, the grade-four team used the tuning protocol to analyze student performance on the ELA end-of-module-one writing task. Teachers reviewed the writing samples from students across the grade performing at a level one. At the start of the meeting the team conducted a quick norming activity to review the expectations of a level three. The teachers took low-inference notes on each work sample and reviewed the work samples against the scoring rubric to identify the learning gaps of each student. Once teachers reflected individually, they discussed trends across all pieces. The team used a graphic organizer to track what students did well, what they needed to improve, and the implications of their learning gaps. At the end of the meeting, the team developed a prioritized list of strategies to implement across the upcoming unit to help improve student performance on the next writing assignment. The list also included strategies specifically targeted to the needs of MLLs and students with disabilities.

- The principal states, “I am a leader among leaders,” and teacher leadership teams are deeply rooted in the school’s day-to-day operations, providing opportunities for teachers to voice ideas about programs that affect student achievement. For example, in addition to the core Instructional Leadership Team, school leaders have created an extended instructional leadership team comprised of administrators, instructional coaches, and one teacher from each grade level. The teachers on this team serve as grade liaisons and plan professional learning and adjust curricula based on students’ needs. Teacher-led initiatives and school committees are encouraged, and PL opportunities are teacher-led. For example, veteran teachers host intervisitations and serve as mentor teachers for new teachers. The parent outreach committee consists of teacher leaders who meet to create opportunities to improve parental involvement. The group attends all Parent-Teacher Association meetings and ensures that parent engagement activities align to parents’ needs. Other teams at the school include the Equity Team, PBIS Committee, and School Culture Committee.