Quality Review Report

2019-2020

Ralph A. Fabrizio School
Elementary 20K170
619 72nd Street
Brooklyn
NY 11209

Principal: Zhen Wu

Dates of Review:
February 26, 2020 - February 27, 2020

Lead Reviewer: Kevin Bradley
The Quality Review Report

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

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

Information about the School


School Quality Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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 State standards and/or content standards</td>
<td>Additional Finding</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 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>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>Well Developed</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>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</td>
<td>Area of Celebration</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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</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>
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</table>

Findings

The vast majority of teachers are engaged in inquiry-based, structured professional collaborations. Distributed leadership structures are embedded through the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT).

Impact

Teacher collaborations have strengthened instructional capacity and promoted implementation of State standards. Teachers teams play an integral role in focusing on the instructional coherence and supporting increased student achievement.

Supporting Evidence

- During a third-grade inquiry team meeting, teachers reviewed informational writing involving one identified student from each of the teachers’ classes. Each teacher shared information about the student, including what the student needed to improve. The team came up with next steps aligned with State writing standards. These included less reliance on the graphic organizer, ensuring that students focus on mechanics (grammar, capitalization), writing legibly, writing to the prompt, and using transitions. The teachers added these next steps to the students’ checklist and also decided to build writing stamina through use of a timer in anticipation of the State assessments. As a result of this inquiry team meeting, the team also planned the next week’s writing tasks to ensure that there was coherence in writing instruction across the grade-level. A teacher reported the following about the impact of teacher collaborations on students: “Their writing became more focused as a result of the inquiry work and that is due to our ability to review their work and share best practices from each other’s classrooms in order to implement new teaching strategies and improve.” Thus, teacher team meetings have strengthened teacher instructional capacity.

- Grade-level inquiry teams’ current work is focused on strengthening student writing and reading. Grade level teams meet weekly to analyze student assessment data and plan instruction. A monthly planning template is used to plan the grade level team meetings. Grade meeting facilitators report back to the ILT at weekly meetings about the team’s work. As a result of the teacher team’s inquiry work across all grades, increased student achievement has been noted. For example, a kindergarten student who was a transitioning English Language Learner (ELL), went from level one to level four in writing, and his Fountas and Pinnell reading level increased a level. A first-grade student went from level two to level three in writing, with the Fountas and Pinnell reading level increasing from F to H. A second-grade student with an IEP (Individualized Education Program) went from level one to level three in writing, and the Fountas and Pinnell reading level increased from level I to J. A third-grade student moved from level one to level two in writing, with the Fountas and Pinnell reading level increasing from K to N. A fourth-grade student showed an increase in writing levels from two to three.

- Embedded distributed leadership is exemplified in the work of the grade-level lead teachers from each department who participate in the ILT meetings. The lead teachers also lead content-area inquiry team meetings and cohort grade-level team meetings to drive key decisions that affect student learning across the school. For example, the teachers lead their respective teams in vertical team meetings to plan to support specific skills in writing across grade levels. The ILT and professional development (PD) committee review school instructional policies, monitor student progress, examine instructional practices, and develop PD plans. Grade leaders and supervisors also use the school’s digital gradebook to analyze the student assessment data and guide teachers to plan lessons to address student needs. For instance, teachers revised lesson plans to include specific vocabulary-building activities based on this data review.
Area of Focus

| Quality Indicator: | 4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision | Rating: | Proficient |

Findings

Observation cycles are frequent. School leaders support the development of teachers with effective feedback that accurately captures strengths, challenges, and next steps using the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

Impact

Feedback articulates expectations for teacher practice and supports teacher development to elevate schoolwide instructional practices. However, in some cases feedback to teachers on observation reports lacks alignment with professional goals, thus missing an opportunity to support teacher growth.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders conduct frequent classroom observations and provide feedback based on the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Each rated item is supported with specific, detailed evidence from the observed class. Next steps for teaching improvements are included throughout the class-specific evidence directed to categories of the Danielson Framework for Teaching. New teachers receive mentor support and attend PD specifically geared towards them. Supervisors share observation reports with each other and calibrate their expectations, identify patterns and trends, and develop guidance for teacher improvement. When a teacher is identified as in need of support for improvement, leaders arrange support from a coach, mentor, or peer teacher.

- Observation reports contain feedback that captures teachers’ strengths and weaknesses and are accompanied by next steps teachers should take in order to improve their practice and impact student success. For example, feedback in one report noted, “In future planning, think of ways to encourage all students to explain their thinking and have their voice heard.” In another report, feedback included, “It is important that your line of questioning promotes student thinking and understanding. Pre-determining the questions you will incorporate throughout your lesson is an important part of planning. When you are revisited, it is expected that you are pre-planning your questions that promote higher order thinking.” While each rated item on observation reports included documentation from the classroom observation to support the rating, the feedback reviewed across reports generally lacked alignment with professional goals for teachers. While teachers participated in initial planning conferences at the beginning of the school year and identified individual goals, observation reports during the school year did not reference those goals consistently across reports. Indeed, of the twelve observation reports reviewed, only three of them included effective feedback aligned to professional goals. Consequently, there are missed opportunities promote teacher growth by targeting individual goals via focused feedback within observations.

- One school goal for the year was to focus on designing coherent instruction, following the Danielson Framework for Teaching rubric. This focus was reinforced during observations and through PD. An example of feedback to a teacher about designing coherent instruction was the following: “It is crucial that each lesson has a specific and clear lesson objective. Lesson objectives should match the desired learning outcome and should relate to the skill students are learning.” As a result, a teacher shared, “The school goal of designing coherent instruction, we have all been trained on that, with training at the beginning of the school year and throughout the year. School leaders are very supportive with the feedback and what you need to work on. The feedback is very detailed.”
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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Findings

Curricula are strategically aligned to State standards, including a focus on daily writing. Rigorous habits and higher-order skills are coherently embedded in academic tasks across grades and subjects.

Impact

Curricular alignment to the State standards results in coherence across grades and subject areas, promoting college and career readiness for all learners. Rigorous habits and higher-order skills require that all students demonstrate their thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and teachers produce curricular documents across content areas that are strategically aligned to the State standards, embedding them in lesson plans, unit plans, and pacing calendars. For example, lesson plans in English Language Arts (ELA) emphasize writing including text-based evidence and academic vocabulary. An example of academic vocabulary is also found in a third-grade math lesson plan about students’ identifying fractions as equal or unequal and explaining why, using the words equal parts, same, unequal parts, and different. Coherence across content areas is evident in curricular documents that outline students’ native language development in a Mandarin dual language program. In addition, curricular documents reflect advanced literacy work. This includes alignment with the Instructional Leadership Framework (ILF), for which the school has chosen to focus on Hallmark 3, building written language. In ELA, the CSR (Collaborative Strategic Reading) model designed to improve students’ reading comprehension is documented in curricula. Moreover, mathematic discourse to deepen students’ understanding of mathematic concepts appears across grade levels.

- A review of curricular documents demonstrates academic tasks that emphasize higher-order skills for all students, as found in the use of objectives. A fourth-grade English as a New Language (ENL) math lesson plan includes the objective, “Mathematicians can use line plots to solve problems involving fractions.” A third-grade math lesson plan includes the objective, “Students will be able to write key details by re-reading sections of text and underlining important details.” A second-grade ELA reading lesson plan includes the objective, “Good readers determine the main idea and key details of a text using text evidence.” Lesson plans also include supports for ELLs and students with disabilities. For example, a kindergarten lesson plan includes differentiated supports for tier one, tier two, and tier three ELLs while a third-grade math lesson plan identifies specific modifications related to IEP goals for named students. As a result, ELLs and students with IEPs are able to demonstrate their thinking according to the same high-level standards expected of all students. Consequently, rigorous habits are embedded in a coherent way across curricula and ensure that all students demonstrate their thinking.

- Lesson plans consistently challenge students to utilize rigorous habits in the course of instruction. Learning objective statements in lesson plans include, from a third-grade math lesson plan, “Students will be able to verbally identify fractions and explain how they identified the numerator and denominator,” and, from an ELA reading lesson plan, “Students will be able to understand exaggerated expressions, hyperbole, in a tall tale and understand author’s meaning.” Lesson plans detail high-level questions to push student thinking and make thinking visible and ask students to provide evidence from the text to support positions. Examples of higher-order questions found in curricular documents include, from a fifth-grade ELA lesson plan, “How can we analyze and evaluate a writer’s technique to develop an original narrative?” and, from a first-grade lesson plan, “What can you learn from someone who is from another country?”
Findings

Across classrooms, teaching strategies consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula, including native language translated supports for ELLs, and students are engaged in discussions and creating meaningful work products.

Impact

Across classrooms, all learners, including ELLs and students with disabilities, are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks and demonstrate higher-order thinking skills. Student work products reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

Supporting Evidence

- A lesson in a first-grade Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) ELA reading class included parallel teaching about main idea and details related to a story. One teacher worked with a large group of 22 students on the floor in front of the screen, and the other was with a group of four, using a small white board to model for the smaller group of students. Students in the large group had a turn-and-talk opportunity with assigned partners. During a second-grade ICT ELA class, students worked on finding the main idea in a texts, including details to support the main idea. The lesson included parallel teaching, with identified students using cut-out details from the text to paste on a graphic organizer to guide their work identifying the main idea. Another group had a higher-level text, as students worked individually on reading and writing details in their notebooks connected to the main idea of this text.

- During a kindergarten English dual-language class, students learned about the vocabulary from the -un family, such as sun, run, and fun. The two teachers modeled the work they expected students to do in pairs. Student had differentiated tasks for different groups. This included one group writing more than one sentence and while another group used filled-out sentence strips with blanks for vocabulary words that students could add to make a logical sentence. Students in groups worked together and rolled dice to select an -un word, charted -un words, and wrote sentences using the words. During a fifth-grade ELA lesson about character traits, students read science fiction texts. Students worked together in groups gathering information about characters. Some pairs had differentiated texts and supports, such as a character traits sheet, inference sheets, and graphic organizers. Higher level groups used their notebooks. Activities such as those described above reveal that there are multiple entry points to the curricula in place across classrooms.

- During a third-grade ICT ELA class, students worked collaboratively on identifying examples of hyperbole in a tall tale about Paul Bunyan. Groups had different parts of the text assigned and used a chart to track hyperbole and author’s meaning. Teachers rotated through room and referred students to checklists that allowed them to remain engaged and track their work together. During a fourth-grade ENL math lesson about using number lines and line plots to solve problems involving fractions, student groups discussed data about hand spans in inches as they worked together to develop tables of information related to their hand span measurements. The teacher displayed on the screen an image of student work she had just taken and had a student explain his work to the whole class. During a fourth-grade reading lesson, students used annotated copies of the text and a collaboration discussion card for support as the teacher prompted students with questions, which they answered using text-based evidence. An ensuing student-centered discussion allowed students to shared additional evidence with their peers. These teaching practices reflected to high levels of student thinking and participation.
Additional Finding

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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>2.2 Assessment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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Findings
Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers use assessments, rubrics, and grading policies that are aligned with the school’s curricula and offer a clear portrait of student mastery. In addition, common assessments create a clear picture of student progress toward goals with the gradebook program.

Impact
High quality assessment practices provide actionable and meaningful feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement. All students, including ELLs and students with disabilities, demonstrate increased mastery.

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, teachers use a common, standardized grading policy that offers a clear portrait of student mastery. This grading policy is reflected in assessments and rubrics across all grades in the school. For instance, the kindergarten through second-grade grading system is defined with performance levels four through one: excels in standards, proficient, below standards, and well below standards. Grades three through five uses percentage scores for core subjects and performance levels for all other subjects, aligned to the same levels used in lower grades. The school has also developed a digital gradebook to collect, analyze, and report the results of major assessments in all core content areas. The ILT and teacher teams periodically analyze assessment results using the digital gradebook, giving teachers meaningful feedback about student achievement.

- Across the vast majority of classrooms, samples of student work products showed teacher-written actionable and meaningful feedback directing students to the steps they should take to strengthen their work. For example, feedback on an ELA assignment included, “Let’s work on hooking the reader with an interesting fact or question.” A student reported, “My essay was missing transitions – transitions were a little hard for me to figure out where do I put them. My teacher helped me out and modeled how to put down the transition. It’s so easy to put in a transition now and it helps my writing.” Evidence of meaningful feedback also appeared on rubrics accompanying student work. For instance, comments on a fifth-grade informative writing rubric for an essay on Rosa Parks offered this feedback: “I like how you included ways we remember Rosa today. Next time try to add captions to your photograph.” A fifth-grade rubric on opinion writing included this: “I like your use of domain-specific vocab. Next time, you should add more transitions in your writing.” Finally, feedback found in a fifth-grade writing notebook offered this: “A lot of details about the first part of the book—but what about the second part and the details that show the change?”

- Common assessments include Fountas and Pinnell running records for reading, administered to all kindergarten through second-grade students and all level two grades three through five students to monitor their literacy progress. Three practice State tests in ELA and mathematics are administered in October, December, and February to track progress, predict performance, and reveal needs. The school also created a Small Group Instruction (SGI) program through flexible programming, offering targeted additional instruction to level 2 students one period per day, five periods per week. An online system tracks SGI, collects student data, and allows teachers to adjust instruction. Data from SGI students show increased mastery of goals for groups of students through an 11 percent increase in the number of students scoring at Level 3 or 4 on the 2019 State ELA exam and a 14 percent increase in the number of students scoring at Level 3 or 4 on the 2019 State Math exam. Overall, for all students, State ELA results increased to 61 percent of students at Level 3 or 4 in 2018-2019 from 53 percent in 2017-2018, and State mathematics results increased to 79 percent at Level 3 or 4 in 2018-2019 from 66 percent in 2017-2018.
**Findings**

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the entire staff through observation feedback, a teacher handbook, and the PD plan. School leaders and staff consistently communicate expectations connected to a path to college and career readiness and successfully partner with families.

**Impact**

School leaders’ written feedback, constant communication, and support for teachers have resulted in a system of mutual accountability for shared expectations. Partnerships with families provide opportunities to support student progress toward high expectations for success.

**Supporting Evidence**

- School leaders conduct frequent classroom observations and provide feedback utilizing the Danielson Framework for Teaching as the standard for professionalism and high-quality instruction. School leaders support teachers in understanding their instructional expectations by conducting classroom visits that are followed by a written summary of what was observed, providing feedback and identifying the next steps which they will be looking for on their next visit. A PD plan makes clear that school leaders support teachers in their understanding of expectations, addressing topics such as reviewing and analyzing Fountas and Pinnell results, updating and revising ELA and math unit plans, and engaging in inquiry work based on Hallmark 3 of the ILF, focusing on advanced literacy, writing daily.

- A teacher handbook communicates high expectations for teachers. Topics include the classroom environment, bulletin boards, the IEP review process, and discipline code compliance. Mutual accountability is evident through grade-level team meetings, where teachers hold each other accountable for student achievement through inquiry teams focused on identified students, and through daily common preps. These involve all teachers at all grade levels holding each other accountable to track academic performance data related to individual students and schoolwide goals. Mutual accountability is also evident with the consultation committee, ensuring timely grade entry to ensure effective tracking of student data as they partner with school leaders to hold all staff accountable for results.

- School leaders and staff communicate high expectations to parents through parent engagement time on Wednesdays, First Fridays, involving parent visitation of the school, phone calls home, and Class DoJo, an online app. A parent handbook contains expectations for schoolwide instruction and the grading and attendance policies. To facilitate communication with families, the parent handbook was translated into Arabic, Chinese, and Spanish. Every family received a hard copy, and the handbook can also be accessed online at the school’s website. Parents are involved as partners with the school through the Parent-Teacher Association and the School Leadership Team. Parent workshops are provided throughout the school year on topics such as social-emotional learning, literacy, attendance, and test preparation. Parents reported using different online apps provided by the school for students and parents to support their children in academics after school. Parents also spoke about high expectations for their children and their partnerships with the school: “My daughter is in the fifth-grade and I attended the workshops for middle school, how to apply, what the different schools look for, what to prepare for. The whole middle school process can be a little daunting, going to open houses, the online application. It helped me with the kind of questions I should ask at open house for middle school.” Thus, the school successfully partners with families to support their children's paths towards college and career readiness.