Quality Review Report

2019-2020

P.S. 195 Manhattan Beach
Elementary 22K195
131 Irwin Street
Brooklyn
NY 11235

Principal: Bernadette Toomey

Dates of Review:
December 5, 2019 - December 6, 2019

Lead Reviewer: Sonja Webber-Bey
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. 195 Manhattan Beach 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>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>
</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>
</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
*To what extent does the school...*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that supports the academic and personal growth of students and adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement
*To what extent does the school...*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school’s instructional goals and meet student learning needs, as evidenced by meaningful student work products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>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>
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</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.4 Positive Learning Environment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Findings

The school’s approach to culture building focuses on emphasizing real-world connections through a challenging interdisciplinary curriculum and promotion of community citizenship. School structures coordinate social emotional learning, youth development, and improved attendance.

Impact

Students exhibit high levels of participation in an inclusive community where their voices are meaningfully involved in school improvement efforts. Each student is known well within all school spaces ensuring growth in both academic and personal behaviors.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders support a student council where students’ anonymous applications are screened by a staff committee and those chosen to go on to campaign, give speeches and win office by a vote of all students in grades two through five. The remaining candidates become diplomats that support council planning, report to and from their classes, and serve as hosts during school events. Student council officers visit classrooms to survey and inform students about coming events, collect contributions to charities students have given input on, and make appearances at community meetings. For example, one appearance resulted in the school obtaining funds for additional physical education equipment from a local community center. Officers also recruit other students for community projects. Money funded by a civic association supported students and staff in re-planting a garden. Furthermore, when a group of teachers were analyzing a social studies rubric for how it could be improved to be more meaningful for Multilingual learners (MLLs), a small group of students were approached for their input. Visuals were added as the students helped to finalize the document. Initiatives such as these reflect the schoolwide focus on nurture, supporting real-world connections to learning, and developing active citizenship.

- Students participating in an ambassador program make a commitment to lead by example. They receive social and emotional development training focused on leadership and service to school and community. They are asked to demonstrate respect, responsibility, and practice effective communications skills. One student interviewed commented, “There was a Respect for All poster contest. My friend got an award. I was happy for her.” Ambassadors learn to initiate school improvement, such as a colonial day, supported by a vote of the students so they could demonstrate their learning and enthusiasm for a recent interdisciplinary unit. These are examples where student voice initiates and guides school improvement efforts.

- A hero program honors students for acts of kindness and positive behaviors. Acknowledged students receive a personalized post-card. For example, a fourth grader received notice saying in part, “You are our hero. You found $4.00 in the lunchroom and turned it in.” Each month students attend a celebration with other hero families. A survey from the Beautiful Me program for fifth-grade girls indicates an eighty percent positive impact on self-esteem after a series of meetings, with most attendees reporting that they learned to appreciate the qualities that make them unique. Students of the month are recognized for their academic achievements including motivation, engagement, collaboration, and self-regulation. In addition, several staff members were trained about trauma and de-escalation tactics to effectively respond to crisis situations such as divorces and deaths. Finally, guidance staff, the school psychologist, and the principal play roles in coordinating communication around attendance goals. The principal keeps a list of the students with the highest absenteeism and calls their families to discuss the correlation between attendance and academic performance. Together, the staff maintains a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that supports the growth of students and adults.
Findings

Instruction, outcomes, strategic teaching strategies, and learning activities are derived from standards-based curricula and reflect school leaders’ promoted beliefs about optimal student learning situations for all learners, which are informed by the priorities of the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

Impact

All learners are engaged in challenging tasks and demonstrate higher-order thinking in work products; however, inconsistent strategic language support limits opportunities to show thinking for some MLLs.

Supporting Evidence

- Students in all classes were engaged in a schoolwide thinking routine: I see, I think, I wonder. First graders examined algorithms to extend commands in a program to move a fuzz bug through a maze. Second graders threw dice to generate numbers which they inserted into open-ended math word problems connected to their current social studies unit. One question was “If there are X number of people entering the Chrysler Building, and X more people enter, how many people are in the building?” There were problems of varying complexity assigned to differentiated partner pairs. Written explanations of steps and diagrams of multiple strategies were applied to determine answers. Third graders simulated a tug-of-war activity before examining photographs of a Nigerian oil town and then used text-evidence to discuss pros and cons. Students then wrote opinion statements responding to the question, “Is oil production beneficial to Nigeria?” All students were engaged in challenging tasks, linked to the Danielson Framework for Teaching wherein goals for all students are to acquire deep and flexible understanding of complex content, to be able to formulate and test hypotheses, to analyze information, and to make connections.

- Math teachers participate in the Department of Education’s Algebra for All program and it has impacted changes in math instruction in grades three through five. Teachers utilize thinking routines in math lessons to support students’ understanding of relationships between quantities. In a fourth-grade class students engaged in a 3-Act Math lesson. Organized in heterogeneous small groups, students discussed a short video clip showing a pickle jar being filled with water. Students were then shown a photograph of four larger pickle jars, and as part of Act 1, students shared what they noticed and what they wondered. Students then generated questions regarding estimates and how to solve for the total time it would take to fill all of the jars. Students, including the MLLs, across classrooms are provided with English-language checklists, manipulatives, and word charts for support and extensions. In a fifth-grade hands-on science class, students utilized technology programs to investigate the interactions of different molecules. Newly admitted MLLs were partnered with English speakers; however, there were no translation tools to support concept integration from previous learning in their native country. Across classrooms, students were appropriately challenged and demonstrated higher-order thinking in work products, though in some cases MLLs did not have strategic supports to further their understanding.

- In a first-grade classroom, students extended examples about kindness from a shared text to incidents from their own experience. The illustrations were collected on a circle map by the teacher. When students began independent writing on the topic, MLLs were provided with picture support samples of kindness expressions. Third graders moved prompts on an interactive board to identify goals, such as talk like a leader, think before you speak, and give a reason, as they prepared for a debate. Later, students had sentence starters available like ‘in my opinion’ and ‘I prefer’ as they wrote platform statements. An instructional support room provides strategic skill-focused lessons for learners needing more time on task, through a variety of programs, manipulatives, and approaches. These instances reflect school beliefs around meeting the needs of individuals through best practices and the use of high-quality supports and extensions.
Findings
School leaders and teachers can articulate a chosen strategy for ensuring curricula are aligned to State standards and other content area standards. Teachers across grades and subjects use student work and data to plan and refine interdisciplinary curricula and academic tasks.

Impact
Students advance through the grades in a coherent, cognitively engaging path which maintains access for individuals and groups of students while promoting college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- This year school leaders and teachers used their analysis of English Language Arts (ELA) State results which indicated that students were challenged to accurately respond to the questions posed in the constructive response section to have teachers plan their lessons together with a focus on deepening students' critical thinking. Teachers in grades kindergarten, first, second, and fourth are participating in a pilot program using interactive read-aloud collections. Each lesson structure identifies questions focused within the texts, about the texts, and beyond the texts. For example, in a first-grade lesson plan, the identified State standards call for students reading literature to describe characters, settings, and major events in a story using key details. Questions the teacher denoted in her plan ranged from what students would think of how two main characters were treating each other early in the story to when there was a time each student had been kind to someone at home or at school. These examples are demonstrative of the school's focus on critical thinking thus, building coherence across grades and subjects, resulting in college and career readiness.

- A third-grade science lesson plan provided clear steps that the teacher would follow to introduce her students to the preparation necessary for participating in a debate. The focus State standard called for students to write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons. The plan included reading an article “Should Regular People Go to Space?” and having the teacher model annotating a section of the text and determining if her evidence would be placed either on the ‘yes’ or ‘no’ column of a graphic organizer. Students would then be guided through another section of text in a close reading, where each of them would annotate some evidence, decide on their opinion, then place their indicated opinion on the graphic organizer. Guided practice templates would be provided for students to complete their independent reading of the article with a summary class discussion prompted by a posed question, “Which opinion has the best evidence to support it?” Strategic alignment of curricula to State standards, such as in this lesson, was observed across the vast majority of classes observed, and results in curricular coherence that promotes college and career readiness for all students.

- Teachers reviewed a previous unit on African Culture and refined it for this year based on the schoolwide focus to improve written constructed responses. Added to general paragraph planning pages were specific lines for topic sentences, detail sentences, and conclusion sentences, along with prompts to utilize linking words. Also included new this year was an option for extending the task with additional paragraphs. The area of the plan that contained several sentence starters as access points for groups of learners needing further support was expanded this year with more samples that are categorized into divisions of culture such as government, trade, folklore, and holidays. In another refined unit, the teachers designed a response paragraph for struggling writers, such as students with disabilities, that prompted reflection with sentence starters such as, “The author's message is…,” “Another reason I think that is…,” and “This relates to the overall theme because…,” thus, ensuring access to the curricula and cognitive engagement for a variety of learners.
Additional Finding

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

Findings

Teachers assess all learning outcomes using a variety of assessment strategies to create a clear picture of student progress and mastery that drives adjustments to curricula and instructional decisions.

Impact

Feedback to students from teachers is both actionable and meaningful. Consequently, adjustments positively impact student performance so that all student demonstrate increased mastery.

Supporting Evidence

- Students quickly came to consensus when reporting on the use of rubrics for written assignments and culminating projects at the end of curricula units. They expressed their understanding of the leveled charts that describe elements related to success. One fourth grader said, “Level 4 is the best!” While working on their writing or developing a project, students explained that each one verbally conferences with their teacher about ways to improve, as well as receives written feedback on how specific improvements can impact their work. One example urged the student to write a title for tally tables. Another student reported that his science teacher indicated a grow for him was to use more descriptive words and science terminology. This student now expressed that by concentrating on these subject words over the last month, he now remembers their meaning and is getting compliments from the teacher. Rubrics with circled areas are consistently attached to finalized student work to highlight the strengths and also have written teacher comments. Lower-grade rubrics have added visuals to deepen student understanding of expectations. In technology class, upper-grade students use Google classroom, where teachers can load feedback comments on writing assignments as they are developed thus, providing meaningful input towards students’ achievement and offering them a clear portrait of their mastery.

- Across classes, teachers consistently track student mastery of skills. For instance, adding is assessed in kindergarten using running records five times each year. Data obtained from the November/December administration has been compared to the September/October baseline, showing improvement in each class for the majority of students. Grade one and grade two took the New York City Performance Tasks at the beginning of the year. Results were captured by class and by individual student. Teachers also analyzed results by determining the scores for demographic subgroups, such as MLLs, students with disabilities, and the school’s racial cohorts. Item analysis determined a clear picture of achievement on specific NYS standards in both ELA and math, leading to adjusted curricular and instructional decisions. For example, grade one teachers decided to add to their morning literacy work weekly letters with multiple mistakes that students would need to edit in order to strengthen sentence structure and conventions. Use of picture and vocabulary support is now incorporated into daily practice for the MLLs, while sentence starters and sentence frames are offered to students with disabilities after their task directions have been repeated. Grade two opted to utilize content-based word charts and graphic organizers to support student writing and has also modified the morning literacy curricular to reflect additional practice to address grammar needs. The Performance Tasks are taken again at the end-of-year to consistently measure levels mastery for all learners.

- Teachers in grades three through five conduct a breakdown of students’ yearly state exam scores, noting in each class how many students achieved results on each of the four evaluation levels. In addition, students are tracked for maintaining achievement levels, moving from levels to a higher level or moving to a lower level. A notation is included as to how many students are former MLLs. Once the information is gathered, teachers discuss students’ needs as a way to converge instructional supports and track mastery during the school year, so all learners are provided opportunities to demonstrate their improving understanding and increased mastery.
Findings

School leaders and other staff members work as a team in study groups, planning sessions, and other professional collaborations, establishing a culture of professionalism that is connected to a college and career pathway for students, which is successfully communicated to family partners.

Impact

Ongoing staff training and a culture of mutual accountability amongst stakeholders, including families, supports student progress towards school expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders have a beginning-of-year meeting with all teachers and staff that communicates expectations. School leaders also share expectations via a handbook detailing expectations for professionalism, communication, and instruction, as well as during School Leadership Team (SLT) meetings. For instance, when a parent questioned how the school addresses the needs of MLLs during an SLT meeting, a staff member described the familiarity teachers in the school had with MLL needs, speaking of the role English as New Language (ENL) teachers play in supporting all teachers with strategies to increase students’ understanding of learning topics as well as the focus on social-emotional supports to acclimate new students to the culture for learning at the school. Teacher teams, along with an ENL advisor, co-plan the social studies lessons for each grade to ensure all students receive similar exposure. Intervisitation exchanges between teachers supports professional learning towards ongoing needs, as well as the inclusion of special education specialists to maintain focus on the Individual Education Program (IEP) goals of some students. Schoolwide training this year on cultural diversity continues to foster the mutual accountability established across the staff for achieving expectations.

- School leaders effectively communicate expectations to families beginning with the distribution of a handbook. A curricular overview is included along with notation on how the focus on Standards will connect students to a college and career pathway. One parent recently emigrated reported that her child’s teacher allows her to write her responses in her first language, then, the parent supports her at home to translate. A series of parent workshops are in place with topics such as math, test strategies and tips, using the world as a classroom, time management, mental health, and middle school fairs and applications. Multiple digital links are listed to facilitate families’ communications with teachers, as well as avenues for coming into school to receive updates on their children’s academic and social-emotional status. Parents interviewed agreed that teachers reach out through daily message folders, notes, and phone calls to clarify for parents how they can support their children. Learning celebrations bring family members into the school to celebrate their children’s accomplishments. Updates on events and accomplishments are posted in the monthly parent newsletter that recognizes the successful partnership between school and families.

- Academic progress is relayed to families through multiple means. Between report cards, teachers distribute interim feedback at the end of units in the core subjects. After a math unit assessment parents were sent a report identifying which examples measured which skills, circling the examples the student completed incorrectly, the grade the student received, and prompting for the student to refer to a text resource and to do the problems again. Each parent was asked to sign the report and discuss it with their child. Notes are also sent home describing results of homework assignments. A social studies assignment that required reading and map skills included a note to parents that described the task, gave a grade with their child’s level, and had next steps. These examples are representative of the effective communications and partnership developed with families to support student progress.
Additional Finding

**Quality Indicator:**

4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development

**Rating:**

Well Developed

**Findings**

Teachers collaborate in professional teams where they develop standards-based, schoolwide instructional practices and engage in distributed leadership structures throughout the school.

**Impact**

Teacher instructional capacity is continuously strengthened, allowing them to play an integral role in key decisions focused on student learning and resulting in increased student achievement for all learners.

**Supporting Evidence**

- The vast majority of teachers engage in structured inquiry through grade-level teams each week. Student work is examined for outcomes and analysis of instructional practices. Periodically, sets of student work are forwarded to school leaders for their input. Specialty teachers collaborate with the grade teams to support students’ mastery of critical concepts and skills aligned to the state standards. For example, the technology teacher supports the research process and integrates 21st century skills into instructional goals. The visual arts and dance teachers prepare ongoing projects that align with the school’s social studies units of study. The physical education teacher also focuses on student achievement through development of healthy mindsets regarding self-esteem and competition. The school participates in a district initiative through an ambassador program. A teacher representative for each of the core content areas and each specialty teacher meets monthly to analyze their students’ needs. A review of the *Advance* teacher evaluation data indicates teacher instructional capacity has strengthened, especially in questioning and discussion techniques, resulting in schoolwide instructional coherence.

- Student data streams show an increase of student achievement for all learners. For example, parents report they can log into the MySchools account for their child and view their current academic status as well as the history across years that shows increased achievement. NYC performance data shows students in this school have historically maintained academic achievement in the top quartile for both ELA and math outcomes compared to other city schools. Teachers are currently tracking 2019-2020 increases in achievement by specific state standards, such as numbers and operations in base ten, determining theme in fourth grade, operations and algebraic thinking, and informational point of view in fifth grade. A kindergarten teacher team observed used their data of student writing outcomes to note increased achievement in use of phonetic spelling and initial sight words for all learners.

- Grade leaders participate on the school’s Instructional Leadership Team with school leaders as Professional Learning (PL) is planned together. For example, it was arranged for the third-grade team to go into a second-grade class to view a lesson from the 3-Act math program. This exploratory approach where students view a problem then discuss among themselves possible strategies for solution was later integrated into future third-grade math lessons. This year a menu of professional learning opportunities lists in-house teachers with proven best practices, inviting colleagues to make intervisitations. While planning for social studies units, lead teachers circulated to various classrooms to share how to supplement the core program with current postings from online sites. Several teachers participating in a pilot read aloud program have modeled for other grade colleagues how a series of pre-planned student questions are starred and earmarked for specific students based on accumulated academic data. Mentors and a teacher development coach are also embedded, so teachers play an integral role, sharing inside classrooms, during team meetings, within the PL cycle, and as key decisions are made about student learning across the school.