Quality Review Report

2019-2020

P.S. 199 Frederick Wachtel
Elementary 21K199
1100 Elm Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11230

Principal: Rosalia Bacarella

Dates of Review:
December 18, 2019 - December 19, 2019

Lead Reviewer: Glenda Esperance
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. 199 Frederick Wachtel serves students in grade PK through grade 5. You will find information about this school, including enrollment, attendance, student demographics, and data regarding academic performance, at http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/tools/report/default.htm.

School Quality Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></td>
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<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>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### 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>Proficient</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>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement

<table>
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<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</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>Proficient</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>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>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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

| Quality Indicator: | 3.4 High Expectations | Rating: | Well Developed |

Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to all members of the school community through instructional rounds, during professional learning (PL) and through on-going feedback. School faculty establishes a tone for learning that communicates a set of high expectations for all students.

Impact

A culture of mutual accountability stemming from clear expectations, targeted PL, and advisory sessions prepares students for the next level.

Supporting Evidence

- In September, the Comprehensive Education Plan, (CEP) goals, and instructional foci are presented to the entire staff. To ensure consistency across the learning community, in addition to a faculty handbook, administrators have created documents that highlight the schoolwide beliefs related to the school learning environment and instructional expectations. Staff members are provided with resources pertaining to lesson plan design and execution, classroom environment, including bulletin boards, display of student work, and classroom artifacts. For example, a document entitled, “Strategies, Tools and Moves to Promote Discussion Toolkit” was created by teachers and distributed to staff to support the instructional focus on class discussion. Instructional rounds are conducted on an ongoing basis to provide teachers the opportunity to compare their own instructional practices with those of the teachers they observe. Teachers shared that this practice has created a sense of collaboration among faculty as well as, an opportunity for self-reflection. Finally, the school created an online communication platform that provides teachers access to schoolwide expectations and resources throughout the school year.

- The school’s culture for learning is systematically communicated and supports high expectations that help prepare students for middle school and beyond. All students in grade five participate in a series of academic workshops centered on developing effective study skills, effective note taking, and organization. Students shared that they found the course useful and learned how to take meaningful notes. Student notebooks included evidence of notes that incorporated the use of student created graphic organizers to deepen their conceptual understanding. Additionally, across grade levels students are provided with ongoing advisement supports and guidance during daily classroom meetings with peers. During these sessions students review the school’s social emotional and academic expectations and discuss action steps to take to meet these standards. During an observation of a grade four meeting, students discussed the importance of demonstrating courage. The class shared their personal experiences about taking risk on challenging tasks and utilizing their voice in the class to ask questions on assignments that are unclear to them.

- Teachers support students in creating a road map of what is expected of them to reach success in the real world, which includes students setting their own goals. Teachers help students create career plans, and provide them with individualized tips that will help them reach their goals. Across grades kindergarten through five, students engage in a college and career readiness course on a consistent basis. The class structure is intended to help students explore various career pathways and further develop problem-solving skills. These courses serve as an outlet for students to apply their reading, writing, and math skills in a real world situation. For example, kindergarten students have the opportunity to create menus and new recipes that are featured at the P.S. 199 Yummy bake shop. Grade three students are offered a course that requires them to conduct interviews to create a documentary on the school’s history. Grade four students learn about money management by designing a personal plan for spending, savings and giving. All students review their overall performance at the end of their course and reflect on their strengths and challenges promoting their readiness for the next level of learning.
Area of Focus

**Quality Indicator:**

| 2.2 Assessment | Rating: | Proficient |

**Findings**

Ongoing common assessments administered across grade levels are aligned to the curricula. Across classrooms students are provided specific, student friendly feedback with recommendations, suggestions, and next steps.

**Impact**

Through the use of assessment, adjustments to curricula and instruction take place as well as providing students with actionable feedback on their work. However, assessment practices do not as yet offer a clear portrait of student mastery.

**Supporting Evidence**

- School leaders indicate that teachers take criteria from rubrics to craft student friendly feedback to guide students’ performance on learning tasks. For example, a review of several writing work samples included teacher comments specific to areas, which needed improvement. Sample feedback included, “You included lots of details to support your thinking. Next time push yourself to highlight more than one theme presented across the text.” This practice is not yet evident across the vast majority of classrooms. A fifth-grade student received feedback that complimented his incorporation of a good lead and advised him to develop a strong claim that could be supported. However, the rubric attached to the writing provided limited guidance in identifying the grading criteria for the assignment. In math students understood the grading policy. The feedback simply directed the student to identify the answer to the problem. During a student meeting, some students were unable to articulate the feedback in their own words diminishing its effectiveness.

- In math, teachers are using assessment data to plan, monitor student performance and implement differentiated activities. Teachers revise lessons, reteach topics, and extend units when necessary. Based on this data, teachers also create intervention activities to address students’ learning gaps. During a meeting with parents they shared that it is a common practice for teachers to modify homework for students who need assistance. One parent stated, “The standards and expectations are the same for everyone but they make modifications to ensure all students get access. She further explained that her child was struggling in math and received additional activities to support him at home.” However, as yet, use of data to provide high performing students with challenging extension activities and offer opportunities for mastery of the higher-leveled standards is not in evidence.

- In English Language Arts (ELA), all teachers are trained on the Fountas and Pinnell assessments, which are administered on an ongoing basis. In math, there are module assessment trackers detailing each student’s progress with mastering grade specific learning Standards. The assessment tracker details improved student achievement in a variety of operations such as adding, subtracting, multiplication, and division. Consequently, school leaders have organized student data and they are able to produce class profiles with individual student benchmark results. Students who do not show progress are given Response to Intervention (RTI) and a plan is put in place for further diagnostics and interventions if needed. This system advances the faculty’s efforts in addressing the learning gaps of students who struggle with specific aspects of the curriculum.
Additional Finding

| Quality Indicator: 1.1 Curriculum | Rating: Well Developed |

Findings
School leaders and faculty use data to plan and refine units of study strategically aligned to the State standards to meet the learning needs of Multi-Lingual Learners (MLLs) and students with disabilities.

Impact
Strategically aligned curricular and academic tasks lead to all students having access and being cognitively engaged in their learning.

Supporting Evidence

- The acquisition of academic vocabulary and building student discussion is evident across grades and content areas. Math units are planned with a focus on student acquisition of a deeper understanding of math concepts. Unit plans include culminating word problems that require teachers to plan lessons utilizing an inquiry-based approach. Increased math reasoning and concept mastery using a variety of strategies and models is required by learners. Across grade levels, literacy units include a balance of informational and literary texts. Unit plans incorporate multiple genres such as historical fiction, poetry, articles, biographies, autobiographies and realistic fiction to build student knowledge.

- All curricular documents evidence planning and refinement based on student data. In math, assessment tracking sheets are used to guide the adjustments and accommodations being made for ELLs and students with disabilities. Activities require students to problem solve, use conceptual reasoning, and write mathematically. Literacy unit plans include leveled texts and are adjusted using data derived from running record benchmark assessments. Students have opportunities to read independently and teachers target specific reading strategies. Thus, all curricular documents include evidence of adjustments and modifications based on student needs.

- A review of unit plans reveals specific supports to enable diverse learners to be cognitively engaged. For example, in a grade two science unit on plant and animal relationships, students were challenged to think like scientists and were to study habitats by observing plants over time. Students planted seeds in the school garden and participated in a seed dispersal lab activity. The plan included leveled informational text, shared readings at different levels, graphic organizers, and scaffolds for students with disabilities. In a grade five social studies unit students were to conduct research to determine how geography determines culture. Students read leveled texts, reviewed charts, and maps to help them write an informational essay about geography’s role in the development of the Pueblo and Mayan societies. Access to content related videos, word banks, and graphic organizers ensuring accessibility for a variety of learners was in evidence.
### Additional Finding

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.2 Pedagogy</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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**Findings**

Across classrooms, teacher pedagogy reflects a set of beliefs that students learn best when there are opportunities for student discussion and small group instruction. Teaching strategies consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula.

**Impact**

Teacher pedagogy that is aligned to a set of schoolwide beliefs leads to a variety of learners being appropriately challenged and demonstrate higher-order thinking skills.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Across classrooms teachers use purposeful grouping to design small group instruction that provides support for students, including students with disabilities. For example, in a grade five Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) math class students were divided into specific learning groups to complete the day’s learning objective. Each group had a specific focus. One teacher worked with those students who needed further teaching on the standard and addressed the misconceptions. The other teacher reviewed new strategies for solving word problems with another group of students. Students not working directly with the teacher were working on a problem set and were directed to work on an exit slip after they completed the task. The general education teacher conducted check-ins and monitored the progress of the remaining three groups and supported the students based on their needs. In a grade three ICT class students were divided into two large groups. The learning target addressed the concept of identifying the main idea in a text using key details from the text to support their answer. The general education teacher had a group while the special education teacher practiced phonics with selected students in another section of the classroom. Clearly, pedagogy was grounded in the concept that strategic grouping and discussion was best for student learning.

- In a grade four ICT literacy class, the teachers divided the room into stations to address the variety of learners in the room. Students were worked in small groups to create a thesis statement and cite evidence from the text to support their position. Leveled texts were utilized to support the wide range of learning abilities in the classroom. Selected students were provided with supports that included graphic organizers and a chart that explained how to write a literary essay step-by-step chart. The special education teacher provided direct, small group instruction to six students. The ENL teacher provided support to her three students. The general education teacher circulated and checked on students assigned to work independently. This school-wide belief was evident across grade level and content areas.

- In the majority of classes teachers use scaffolds and supports to address the needs of individual students, including ELLs and students with disabilities. In a grade five class, students worked in pairs to complete a research project exploring how early societies might have crossed into America. Students used the information they gathered from the research activity to complete an extended response question. The teacher provided resources that included videos, pictures, and maps and leveled articles to guide students in accomplishing the task. In a kindergarten class students were writing stories. Word banks, sentence frames, and phonics charts were provided for them to use. These pedagogical practices were observed in most classes and ensured that students had multiple entry points into the learning.
### Additional Finding

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

School leaders provide feedback to teachers through commendations, recommendations, and next steps aligned to Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. School leaders have an effective system that uses teacher observation data to design and facilitate professional learning for all.

**Impact**

Teacher observations are used to implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection. School leaders make informed decisions and develop plans for succession and appropriate teacher assignment.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Across grade levels, teacher observation reports show that staff members are provided with feedback in the form of commendations and recommendations with suggestions for instruction. In one report, the school leader praised the teacher for establishing an inviting classroom. As next steps, it was stated that the administrator would like to see the teacher take advantage of the positive class tone to foster deeper conversations among students. A recommendation to the teacher included the creation of clear expectations for discussion through explicitly modeling what discussion should look like and sound like for students. Additionally, school leaders suggested sentence starters and conversation prompts to elicit student participation. In another teacher report, the school leader provided the teacher with feedback specific to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* around planning and preparation. The school leader stressed the importance of teaching the writing process and teaching students strategies they can use with all types of writing such as dialogue and elaboration. Instructional tools for students to use to enhance their writing were provided.

- During cabinet meetings, school leaders review mentoring plans, observation report data, and coaching assignments. Teachers shared that they use feedback from administrators to inform their teaching practices. School administrators use a variety of methods to provide teachers with ongoing support to improve their pedagogy. One teacher shared that during a post observation conference, the feedback provided addressing effective discussion techniques was a bit unclear and when she shared her feelings of confusion school leaders were quite eager to demonstrate their expectations. An intervisitati on session was scheduled to enable her to observe the actual practice being recommended in a colleague’s room. As a result, she was effectively able to incorporate the recommendation into her teaching practice. Another teacher stated, “Our school leaders want to help us improve and we are also encouraged to do research to find out if there is a better way of implementing ideas.”

- There is a professional learning calendar that is generated from a review of classroom observation data, which also includes the attendance to external workshops based on individual need. Internal PL sessions are designed based on schoolwide patterns that have been identified and prioritized after each observation cycle. For example, in November, based on identified trends in teacher ratings school leaders hosted PL sessions on using assessment during instruction. The workshops focused on the utilization of specific assessment strategies to enhance learning for students during readers and writers workshop. PL is also customized and assigned to support the individual needs of staff. At the beginning of the year, teachers self-reflect and identify a specific area for development. Teachers are provided with opportunities to participate in individualized professional learning to strengthen their pedagogical practices over the course of the school year. School leaders use a common data spreadsheet to log the action steps, feedback and next steps being provided to the teachers. Evidence of success is measured using student work products. This progress-monitoring system ensures effective teacher growth and development.
### Additional Finding

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<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 engage in inquiry-based, structured professional collaborations. Distributed leadership structures such as teacher-led professional development and teacher-led committees are embedded throughout the school community.

**Impact**

Teachers’ integral role in key decisions positively affect student learning across the school. Schoolwide instructional coherence promotes shared leadership and promotes accelerated student learning.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Teams meet on an ongoing basis to address a problem of practice identified on the grade level with regards to literacy and or math. The work of each team is grounded in research-based texts and the articles provide teachers with insight on existing educational theories as well as strategies that inform the work of teacher collaborations. For example, pre-kindergarten to grade two teachers wanted to increase phonemic awareness among students. Teachers conducted multiple lesson studies with an emphasis on planning for small group instruction. Teachers worked collaboratively to identify and incorporate strategies that make lessons accessible to all students. As a result, over time the teachers saw a need to adjust pacing and incorporate additional pictures to help vocabulary growth. These structured professional collaborations support individual professional growth and strengthen instructional coherence across the school.

- The third-grade team was observed reviewing work samples of math tasks collected from students across the grade. For this session, the team examined students’ responses to a multi-step word problem, which addressed multiplying one-digit whole numbers by multiples of 10. This work was aligned to the school’s math goal of shifting from procedural to developing conceptual understanding. The team had a set of guiding questions that determined the scope of the work. Prior to reviewing the samples of student work, the teachers normed and calibrated their scoring practices to ensure that all participants were clear on the grading expectations. The teachers separated into pairs, reviewed student work, and graded it as partners. They categorized the characteristic of each performance level on the data analysis tool. A discussion on how the student responded followed. Student misconceptions were logged and trends were identified across the grade and by class. At the end of the meeting, teachers created a list of next steps for instruction, which included reviewing paragraph structures and students’ use of relevant details when responding to the questions. Team participants shared that they valued these meetings and incorporated the learning that surfaced into their lessons. Recent data indicates that students have demonstrated increased student achievement on schoolwide benchmarks.

- Teachers play active and integral roles in affecting student learning across the school. The schoolwide professional development committee is comprised of administrators, an instructional coach, and teachers. This team works collaboratively to develop the school’s professional learning plan. The school offers vertical teacher-led professional development opportunities and encourages teacher-led initiatives and school committees. For example, the Horizon Vertical Team meets on a consistent basis to look at curriculum and make refinements based on the needs of the Autism Spectrum Disorder students. The team conducts case studies on students, and designs interventions and supports. The Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Team worked collaboratively to research selects and implement a schoolwide SEL curriculum. The team established building norms, conducted trainings for staff and students resulting in a decrease in the number of occurrences as indicated in the OORS reporting system.