Quality Review Report

2019-2020

P.S. 204 Vince Lombardi
Elementary 20K204
8101 15 Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11228

Principal: Nancy Tomasuolo

Dates of Review:
January 29, 2020 - January 30, 2020

Lead Reviewer: Kimberly Bradley
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. 204 Vince Lombardi 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>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></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>
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<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>
</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>
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</table>
### School Culture

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

### Systems for Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<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>Proficient</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>
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</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations and provide training to the entire staff with a focus on meaningful and productive discourse, the school’s instructional focus. School leaders and staff effectively communicate expectations for a path to college and career readiness to families through meetings, workshops and newsletters.

Impact

Communication and professional development around high expectations results in a culture of mutual accountability. Partnerships with families support students in their progress toward college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- Frequent classroom observations provide feedback utilizing the Danielson Framework for Teaching as the standard for professionalism and quality instruction. Observation reports include specific language from the rubric, evidence from the classroom observation that supports the rating, and actionable next steps ensuring that teachers clearly understand expectations. Those expectations are also communicated and supported through staff memos and professional development throughout the year. School leaders emphasized the school’s instructional focus on student discourse and collaboration and what instructional practices should be implemented for the focus to be realized. Teachers are asked to use a schoolwide listening and discussion protocol and advanced literacy practices such as engaging texts and academic vocabulary which directly aligns to the Danielson rubric for designing coherent instruction and using questioning and discussion techniques. As a result of feedback and professional learning, teachers are supported in meeting the school’s expectations.

- School leaders consistently communicate the school’s goal promoting the use of discourse strategies to improve critical thinking and problem solving across all grades and content areas. Teachers are expected to provide opportunities for students to engage in discourse with peers and use student performance data to inform instructional adjustments. To ensure all students are provided opportunities for higher-level thinking, it is expected that students will demonstrate their mathematical thinking, investigate and explain through a scientific lens, and read a variety of informational and literacy texts. Through clear and frequent communication, staff understands the high expectations of school leaders.

- School staff work with students and ensure they are on track for the next grade level and middle school. Parents spoke of the partnership they have with the school and specifically referenced the parent meetings and workshops the school provides throughout the year. Parents are informed about the middle school application process through one-on-one meetings and workshops. School leaders attend PTA and School Leadership Team meetings and inform parents of the progress the school is making toward the school’s goals. Parents spoke positively about the availability of school leaders and staff and the input parents provide to the school regarding the allocation of resources and topics for workshops. The school also communicates expectations through emails, phone calls, text messages, parent-teacher conferences, and during workshops provided by teachers. Information is sent home to families in multiple languages including English and Spanish. Thus, through a variety of strategic methods the school is successfully partnering with families to support students in meeting all expectations.
Area of Focus

<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, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect an articulated set of beliefs about how students learn best through tasks that require higher order thinking and meaningful discourse. These practices are informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching and focus on student engagement and collaboration.

Impact

Across classrooms, student work products and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking and participation so that all students produce meaningful work products.

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, teaching practices, including meaningful discourse, reflect the articulated beliefs of how students learn best. During a kindergarten math lesson focused on identifying less or more, students rotated in station activities that provided manipulatives such as blocks, yarn, patterns, and scales that students used to practice determining more or less. Students who needed additional support met in a small group with the teacher. There were clear routines for students when they completed the work at one station and transitioned to the next station in addition to a model hypothesis statement they could reference. During a fourth-grade science lesson about light and its impact on geckos, student pairs engaged in a listening and discussion protocol where they shared their thinking to teacher generated discussion questions such as “How does light allow an animal to see something?” and restated their partner’s thinking as they prepared to use the vision and light simulation later in the lesson.

- During classroom visits, student discussion supported high levels of thinking and participation. In a fifth-grade literacy lesson focusing on using tools and strategies to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words, students were in four different groups reading a lexile leveled passage. The teacher was working with one of the groups and the other three groups were either working on context clues and vocabulary questions or extended writing responses and used accountable talk stems and checklists to support their discussions and writing. During a third-grade science lesson for English Language Learners about animals and their traits and characteristics, students worked in small groups and were provided with sentence stems and clay animals to support their discussions of specific animals and their similarities. During this lesson, there were clear routines and the conversations were student-led. While there is evidence across classrooms that student work products reflect high levels of student thinking and participation, it is not yet evident in the vast majority of classrooms.

- Meaningful student work products across classrooms provided evidence of student thinking and participation, but it is not yet evident in the vast majority of classrooms. During a third-grade lesson focusing on the main idea of the text, after the teacher modeled how to find the main idea in a model text, students worked in pairs as they practiced identifying the main idea and the key details that support the main idea in the text as they completed a written short answer response. During a first-grade lesson on how shadows are made, pairs of students completed a shadow sort activity using cards and a sorting mat to determine if specific objects were a blocking object, light source or shadow. Students then practiced using sentence stems with a partner as they discussed why objects made a shadow or whether they agreed or disagreed with their partner.
Additional Finding

<table>
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<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 with a focus on student discussion and making claims based on conceptual understandings that is supported by evidence. Rigorous habits and higher-order skills are emphasized in academic tasks across grades and subjects.

Impact
Curricular alignment to the State standards results in coherence across subject areas, and the effective preparation of students for the next grade level. Rigorous and higher-order tasks require that all students demonstrate their thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- Courses, lesson plans, unit plans, and curriculum maps reflect full integration of the State standards across content areas. For example, lesson plans in literacy emphasize the value of text-based evidence and the use of content and academic vocabulary. This is evidenced in a plan where students are asked to identify the main idea in an informational text and to reference the relevant textual evidence to support their response. Applying mathematical thinking is incorporated in a lesson that requires students as they work in pairs to discuss different strategies to solve a problem that requires the addition of up to four two-digit numbers. Questions have students reflecting on which strategy is the most efficient and explain their reason and having them apply their previous mathematical learning.

- A review of curricular documents demonstrates academic tasks that promote preparing for the next grade level and college and career readiness for all students. A fifth-grade science lesson plan includes a task in which students apply their understanding of molecules as they use models to collaboratively discuss how differences in molecules cause substances to separate. A first-grade reading plan describes how students are learning what good readers do to read words with accuracy and understanding. A Kindergarten math lesson describes how students will work in stations as they practice their reasoning to understand the concept of more or less.

- Lesson plans consistently challenge students to utilize rigorous habits in the course of instruction and include objectives that state what students will be focused on. Examples include, “Students will be able to use context clues to determine the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary,” and “Why is an increase in light affecting the health of Tokay geckos in a Philippine rain forest?” Lessons include opportunities for students to reflect on their learning and identify additional questions they have. Plans contained higher-order questions such as, “How will understanding how to use context clues help us to become better writers?” and “Does the model fit with what we know about molecules or which statements does it conflict with and why?” Lesson plans for students with disabilities and English Language Learners (ELL) incorporated the use of sentence frames, graphic organizers, the previewing of content and academic vocabulary, graphics, and leveled texts.
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, checklists and rubrics that are aligned with the school’s curricula and focus on critical thinking and cooperative learning. The school uses common assessments to determine student progress toward goals across grades and subject areas.

Impact

Assessment practices provide actionable and meaningful feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement and provide opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery.

Supporting Evidence

- Across the vast majority of classrooms, samples of student work products showed teacher written actionable feedback providing students with the steps they should take to strengthen their work. One recommendation included, “You explained the reasons why the train changes from floating to falling very well. Your explanation makes sense, but I would like to see more details about magnetic force and how it makes the train float.” Another example read, “Next time, try elaborating on your reasons and introduction.” Yet another example read, “You showed nine in three groups. Next time try a scattered arrangement and showing the number path you used to count them.” In work samples that include multiple drafts and revisions, there is evidence that students incorporate the feedback from their teacher and peers resulting in improved work products and progress toward their goals.

- Across the vast majority of classrooms, rubrics and checklists are used as tools to support student growth. Specific task related rubrics and checklists are employed including an opinion writing rubric and checklist, self-assessment checklist, scientific explanation rubric, and a discussion and listening checklist. An example of a student reflection on their progress states, “I will try to get at least nine on the multiple choice and six on short responses and also try to get at least a three on the essay.” Evidence of students’ use of these tools is posted on student work examples and bulletin boards. The students shared they receive feedback from both teachers and peers as well as self-reflect on the progress they made on an assignment. As a result of the use of rubrics, and/or checklists for student reflection on their process, there is evidence that students are progressing toward mastery across grades and subjects.

- The administration of a performance assessment in reading and math at the beginning of the year provides data regarding the skill level of each student and is used in the planning of instruction by grade level teams. Teachers across grade levels also use conferencing notes, informal student observations, Teachers College reading benchmark assessments, Eureka Math and Go Math! assessments, and on demand pre, interim and post writing assessments in science to assess the progress of students during the year. Latest data indicates that using common assessments and providing multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning is resulting in increased student mastery across grades and content areas. The student average proficiency in both math and English Language Arts (ELA) is above the city average.
Findings

School leaders support teacher development with effective feedback and recommendations from observation cycles. School leaders provide supports for teacher development through professional development opportunities and instructional coaches.

Impact

School leaders are providing effective feedback and convey expectations to teachers using the Danielson Framework for Teaching to inform improvement of instructional practices and plan professional development resulting in pedagogical growth and reflection.

Supporting Evidence

- To support the capacity of teachers, school leaders work on the scheduling and calibration of their observations with the three assistant principals focused on their assigned grade bands and the principal focused on untenured teachers. School leaders provide frequent observations to build teacher capacity and meet at the beginning of the school year to determine their observation schedule and monitor on a regular basis the completion of observations using an observation tracker and what they are observing in classrooms. School leaders also worked with central office personnel to improve calibration of their ratings. As a result of the focus on organizing and calibrating their observations, school leaders strengthened their capacity to support the development of teachers.

- The cycle of observations is also supported by instructional coaches who work closely with teachers on improving their instructional practice through professional development and coaching cycles. Coaches work with teachers based on class visits and feedback from coaches and school leaders. A review of coaching logs provides evidence of the support coaches deliver to individual teachers with the focus determined by the teacher and next steps identified collaboratively by the teacher and coach. Examples of focused support included guidance in teaching revised math lessons and ensuring that students are participating in meaningful talk. Some of the support provided by the coaches included guiding the teacher through the lesson format they should follow each week and encouraging students to not only talk about what they did but why they did it. Teachers shared during meetings that they feel supported by school leaders and coaches and this has resulted in improved instructional practices across grades and subjects.

- In order to support all teachers, the school leader’s instructional focus on improving students’ critical thinking and meaningful discourse is emphasized in the feedback provided to teachers and includes references to the Danielson Framework for Teaching components related to using question and discussion techniques, engaging students in learning, and using assessments. This focus was evident in observation feedback; for example, “Students engaged in partnership discussions which enabled them to talk to one another about the animal structures they visualized as they revisited the text.” Another example states, “The learning tasks were fully aligned with the instructional outcomes of using context clues to figure out unknown words. The tasks were designed to challenge student thinking, inviting students to make their thinking visible as they participated in group activities. The next step would be to provide the students time to read independently in order to practice this skill and transfer their learning to a different context.” Through specific feedback aligned with the school’s instructional focus, there is improvement in student engagement as evidenced in higher teacher ratings on Advance observation reports.
### Additional Finding

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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</table>

#### Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in grade-based teacher teams that meet and share best practices. Teacher teams consistently analyze data and student work for students they share.

#### Impact

Teachers' collaborations have strengthened their instructional capacity. Teacher team work typically results in progress toward goals for groups of students.

#### Supporting Evidence

- Teachers have strengthened their instructional capacity through team collaborations. Teachers shared that each grade level meets weekly to look at student work, conduct research or plan instruction. In addition to grade-level meetings, an instructional leadership team meets monthly that includes both teacher and school leader representation across all grade levels. A review of the instructional leadership team’s memos and agendas provides evidence of the team’s work to share information with grade level teacher teams across the school and to identify the school’s instructional priority to know every student well and using data to identify their strengths and weaknesses to support literacy improvement efforts. As a result of various teacher collaboration structures across the school, teachers are strengthening their instructional capacity.

- An observed fourth-grade inquiry team used a protocol to look at student work samples from the Amplify Chapter 1 critical junction assessment checkpoint and discussed their interpretations of the selected student work and their noticing. Team members identified that while students provided written responses to the prompts, students struggled with using evidence to support their answer or using academic language. Team members also identified that students didn’t understand what the prompt was asking, and responses did not connect to all portions of the prompt. The team agreed upon next steps, including using sentence starters, a model response or exemplar, word banks, and checklists. Teachers reported that the work of teams has improved student outcomes.

- Grade-level teams analyze student performance data throughout the year and identify next steps as evidenced in agendas and minutes. A review of these documents show that teachers use a protocol to analyze student work that includes a description of the student work, interpreting the student work, and implications for classroom work. Across grades, teams found that students need to continue to work on explanations in extended written responses and their use of content and academic vocabulary. Some next steps to address these gaps include the use of the listening and discussion protocol, the use of sentence stem, vocabulary cards and visuals. As a result of analysis of student performance data by teacher teams, teachers made informed instructional adjustments that resulted in progress toward goals for groups of students.