Quality Review Report

2019-2020

P.S. 011 William T. Harris

Elementary 02M011

320 West 21 Street
Manhattan
NY 10011

Principal: Robert Bender

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

Lead Reviewer: Phyllis Siwiec
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. 011 William T. Harris 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>
</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>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>
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## School Culture

**To what extent does the school...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<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>Area of Celebration</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>
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## Systems for Improvement

**To what extent does the school...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the schools instructional goals and meet student learning needs, as evidenced by meaningful student work products</td>
<td>Additional Finding</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>
</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>
</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>
</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>
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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>
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## Findings

The school community’s approach to culture-building, discipline, and social-emotional support is informed by a theory of action. Additionally, structures that support students are in place.

## Impact

Student voice meaningfully initiates decision-making that has an impact on schoolwide improvements. The adoption of a specific student program focused on social and emotional growth and personalized guidance-services support impact the personal and academic growth of all students and adults, promoting a safe and inclusive environment.

## Supporting Evidence

- The theory of action for improving school culture shared by the school leaders and staff states that all children have the ability to reach their true potential within a diverse community of learners. As each student possesses unique strengths and challenges, teachers strive to teach in a variety of ways to tap into them. Through the use of daily Morning Meetings and Closing Classrooms, students openly discuss concerns or issues that arise throughout the day. Students, parents, and staff shared that they feel safe in the school and surrounding school community. School leaders also believe that in order to have a successful school culture, student input is needed. One adopted approach is their student-centered social-emotional support program. This approach has many goals, one being that every child feels a part of his or her classroom and school community each day. Using a common language along with clear expectations creates a culture where students own their behaviors and work together to achieve goals. In addition, all classrooms across the entire school created their own charters that are agreements about the expectations to which each class holds themselves accountable.

- School diversity is celebrated through events and curricular decisions that support a more inclusive culture. Each month, a different cultural group is studied and feted, such as October when it was Latinx-Spanish Heritage Celebration Month. Families who represented these cultures shared their food, art, and dance. Creating diverse classroom libraries by including books that reflect characters from a wide range of backgrounds, ethnicities, and cultures is also a focus. This initiative evolved from the racial-equity work with teams that exist in the school for staff, parents, and students. An example of the importance of student voice is found in a student-led initiative to support students during lunch by volunteering to be Lunch Leaders. By helping younger students navigate the lunchroom, learn to share discussions across the table, clean-up and prepare to exit the cafeteria, older students act as role models and problem-solvers. Student voice is seen as an essential aspect of the school’s culture where students have opportunities for more choice about how they are learning that school leadership states and is evidenced in teacher observations.

- Structures in place create a school culture that fosters social-emotional and academic inclusion. Teachers read literature out loud to their students to encourage conversations on various social-emotional issues and instill compassion and respect for oneself and others. Students are known well by at least one adult including members of the Guidance Team that includes a guidance counselor, school psychologist, and a school social worker. Additionally, the Academic Intervention Team address the whole child by discussing issues and concerns for specific students. Integration of the arts into the school program allows for students to focus on one area in the arts and become familiar with new ways to express themselves while getting to know staff whose careers are focused on art production and exploration. Students reported that through this, they have developed a deeper understanding of perseverance, empathy, and kindness because of the adults in the school to whom they can address personal, academic, and emotional issues resulting in their feeling more comfortable and included in the school community.
Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect a coherent set of beliefs formulated through staff discussions about how students learn best. Students engage in high levels of thinking, participation, and exhibit ownership over their learning.

Impact

Although shared beliefs among staff about how students learn best include stages of instructional strategies called: Ignite, Chunk, Chew and Review, and the workshop model, the blending of these two could potentially strengthen the school’s cohesive schoolwide approach. Student discussions and goal-setting practices evidence high levels of thinking and student ownership.

Supporting Evidence

- The staff’s philosophy and culture support an engaging education that is focused on the individual learner to support ownership by creating an environment that is focused on each student’s needs. The staff uses two methodologies in their instructional design: workshop model and an approach to instruction that focuses on Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education (CR-SE). The CR-SE approach involves Ignite as a launch to a newly introduced topic or activity with real-life application; Chunk to make information accessible; Chew to actively process information, and Review, which refers to an opportunity to apply new learning. Observed instruction in classes demonstrated the task of further aligning these two approaches so that students were able to experience an Ignite as a launch or mini-lesson as in the introduction of a writing assignment or in the opening of a math lesson.

- Observed lessons had features from the schoolwide workshop practices and those that are newly adopted. During a grade-one reading lesson, the teacher demonstrated what lingering looks like in practice by using her finger to slowly move across the page underneath words. The class shared how they could linger and learn at the same time. Teacher-team meeting minutes show a consistent focus on students’ in-class discussions, what students need to know to improve and how students learn best and how that knowledge impacts instructional delivery. Also observed in the vast majority of lessons was small-group instruction with students in groups designated as either mixed-ability groups, approaching proficiency, or exceeding. Students were engaged cooperative, and shared ideas and feedback in order to produce meaningful writing products, math posters, and social studies and science displays.

- The vast majority of observed lessons demonstrated discussions that resulted in student products that displayed high levels of student thinking and student ownership. For example, during a grade-five social studies class, the teacher modeled the use of a format for writing a thesis statement that included a claim while students discussed reasons that supported the claim, and then analyzing which reasons were most likely to include the most evidence. This lesson also illustrated aspects of ignite, chunk, chew and review. The writing projects that resulted showed connections to the thesis-building foci that students had selected and who shared that the connections provided guidance and were meaningful. Discussion formats included debates on the impact of Native American contributions to contemporary life in student-selected topics. Additionally, turn and talks focused on using a partner A and B protocol where students were interacting on issues faced by a character in a story that students chose, reviewing how the issue was resolved, and exploration of what the character learned. Additional examples included small-group discussions exploring area and perimeter using manipulatives, visual representations and algorithm formulas. Discussions were designed to include student skills, favored learning styles, and student choice.
Additional Finding

Quality Indicator: 1.1 Curriculum
Rating: Well Developed

Findings
Through teacher teamwork with support and guidance from school leaders and math and literacy coaches, curricula are strategically aligned to the State standards. Rigorous habits and higher-order skills are emphasized and embedded in a coherent way in curricula and academic tasks.

Impact
Multiple resources, such as in math and English Language Arts (ELA), result in the promotion of college and career readiness for all students and curricular coherence across grades. Emphasis on rigorous habits and higher-order skills in academic tasks ensures that all students demonstrate their thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- The school staff believe students learn best if strategies are implemented in curricula and instruction that build coherence across grades and content areas. All teachers have included the main components of CR-SE design principles into their unit and lesson planning. In a grade-four social studies lesson plan about the contributions of the Lenape Nation to New York State and the USA, the class discusses items in their everyday life that can be attributed to the Lenape culture such as popcorn and the name Manhattan. Each of six triads research a different category of contributions such as food and agriculture. A debate between the two highest-rated contributions follows. In another example, a grade-three writing lesson plan includes an activity where students view a video about a topic of interest during the *ignite* task. With a focus on organization used to present any information to an audience, this launch introduced students to three different organizational structures as guides for writing non-fiction reports.

- Curriculum maps are constructed coherently using State standards-aligned reading and writing units of study. To replace the previous math curriculum, a more comprehensive math program based on several math curricula across all grades was implemented. Several science and social studies units are integrated with ELA. Teachers across subjects meet in grade-level teams to plan common units that demonstrate coherence across grades and subject areas using the CR-SE design. For example, in a math planning document, all math strands reference specific units using Number Talks found in the core adopted programs which are used to create the curricula from kindergarten to grade five including general education classes and those designated for gifted and talented students. Across grades, the writing curricula reflect alignment to the non-fiction standards that begin with a writing unit in kindergarten and build up to literary essay writing in grade four, culminating in grade five with opinion writing and flash drafting. Examined curricular documents referenced skills developed through connected practices across grades as in pre-writing research, drafting with peer review, and feedback and thesis statement with evidence are ways that students are prepared for college and career readiness while succeeding in increased rigorous tasks.

- Activities requiring higher-order thinking are evident in lesson plans across grades and subjects, requiring that all learners demonstrate their thinking. For example, the math curricula make up a blended program that includes math concepts taught through hands-on problem-solving strategies that are enriched for all students. Teachers include accommodations for students with disabilities and Multilingual Learners (MLLs) in each lesson such as small-group assignments, visuals, and videos. A grade-three math lesson plan features cooperative groups where each group has a particular focus during the *ignite* phase by working on ways to divide up their recess space specific to different activities as a way to uncover area and perimeter as math concepts that relate to the real world. In a grade-five math workshop lesson plan, students are expected to interpret a multi-step word problem that involves addition and subtraction of fractions in order to understand ratios and rates.
Findings

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, teachers’ assessment practices consistently reflect the varied use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self and peer assessment.

Impact

High-quality assessment practices provide actionable and meaningful feedback to students regarding student achievement that is available after each assignment or when requested by students. Assessment practices result in effective classroom adjustments and modifications to subsequent lessons thus, meeting students’ needs and making students aware of their next learning steps.

Supporting Evidence

- The vast majority of teachers use assessments, rubrics, and checklists to gauge a clear portrait of student mastery which provides them with actionable and meaningful feedback several times per week, after assignments are completed, or when a student requests feedback. Students shared that after receiving genre-specific rubrics with comments that include teacher-written actionable feedback with next steps, they then confer with teachers on the feedback and how it can have an impact on their writing. Students improve upon their writing by implementing the next steps detailed in the feedback. On a grade-three writing piece, feedback stated, “This is an incredible first info writing piece! You know so much about this topic (black diamond ski trail). Your next steps are to: 1. Use transitional phrases to describe parts and steps; 2. Try to elaborate using different types of examples—facts, statistics, mini stories.” Another example observed on a grade-five non-fiction reading response, the teacher’s feedback stated, “Strong Thesis!…stating reasons to support your claim. Next steps: To make this thesis even stronger remember to name the author’s craft techniques in the thesis statement.” In addition, teachers keep notes about individual student progress over time recording conference notes in ELA and math.

- Meaningful feedback on student work is intended not only for students to respond to regarding that specific assignment, but also to guide students’ future work. Students spoke about using feedback to guide future work in writing and math in particular. In describing the best way to learn for themselves, students spoke about receiving peer feedback through collaborative work, seeking out feedback from teachers and their peers with increased confidence. Students self and peer assessments were described as giving each other actionable and meaningful feedback and sharing the format of glows and grows with next steps. Students understand their next steps to improve by implementing feedback in future projects.

- Teachers use a variety of strategies to check for understanding during their lessons and make in-the-moment effective adjustments. As observed, a grade-two teacher on the carpet walked away from the carpet and upon returning, decided to redirect the students based on the work students had completed. In another example, in a grade-three writing lesson the teacher reminded students about their table of contents by thinking of each chapter as if it is a file when stating, “As you come up with ideas, try to think about which section that idea belongs to.” Additional techniques include a grade-four teacher who walked around and asked, “What type of questions could you ask yourself when you determine whether or not a piece of evidence supports your claim?” Students jotted their questions and the teacher asked, “Let’s look at the first section. What did you jot that it was mostly about? How did you figure it out?” Two students stayed with the teacher for a reteach after the rest returned to their work. In grade-five math the teacher asked, “How did you measure the area?” The teacher then asked students to turn and talk with their partners before they shared their process. Students shared several different strategies that were revealed during the debrief following the shared conversations. The share-out clarified some confusion between area and perimeter, as shared by students.
Findings
School leaders consistently publicize high expectations to the entire staff through their staff communications and provide them with professional development (PD). Expectations connected to a path to college and career readiness are effectively communicated by staff and school leaders as they successfully partner with parents.

Impact
All staff and families as partners are part of a culture of mutual accountability that supports student progress toward high expectations.

Supporting Evidence
- Administrators provide consistent communication to all staff through a multitude of measures including bulletins, the faculty handbook, weekly emails, ongoing PD, and weekly staff meetings that support and lead to a culture of mutual accountability. Some of these include schoolwide expectations and non-negotiables, such as the implementation of the workshop model, math practices with problem-solving, and the integration of creative arts and social emotional strategies. Support by administrators to implement these expectations comes through a consistent cycle of observations and actionable feedback aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Data collected from these cycles informs PD sessions that school leaders guide with teacher input. The curriculum team, made up of administrators and teachers, demonstrates a mutual accountability for staff growth. As school leaders stated, “Teachers can ask for help. We are all teachers. They can give us feedback, too.” Also, teachers stated that during intervisitations, they can observe and give meaningful feedback to each other thus, holding each other accountable for effective pedagogy.

- School leaders share high expectations through a staff handbook that details guidelines for all aspects of instruction with particular attention paid to logistics, routines, PD, grade-level curricula, and homework. School leaders plan and deliver along with teachers individual and whole-school PD based on the high expectations shared through faculty meetings and those made evident through feedback to teachers based on the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Classroom observations and intervisitations are methods of accountability. Throughout the school year, PD topics are connected to teacher observation feedback along with a mentor-mentee program for teachers new to the school.

- Expectations are effectively communicated to families through newsletters, the school website, as well as through teacher emails, the Parent Teachers Association (PTA) monthly newsletter, and parent-teacher conferences held twice a year in November and March. In addition, parents engage in Family Fridays, which occur once a month. Parents shared that the school website has information and expectations for each grade level. There are also parent workshops offered by school leaders and coaches in literacy and math about what parents can do at home to support their children. Parents spoke of reinforcing the importance of developing habits as readers to prepare students for college and careers as a result of workshops and conversations with teachers. As part of the preparation for the middle-school experience, parents shared that the school offers middle-school tours for grade-five students. Parents also receive portfolios of student work with rubrics and assessments with work samples at least four times per year in addition to progress reports. In addition, they shared the impact of the many resources provided to them by the school through the website, teacher conversations, and PTA workshops. Parents feel better able to guide their children through homework, reading at home, and developing a better understanding of the math curriculum.
Findings
Teacher teams systematically analyze key elements of teacher work including teaching practices and the analysis of assessment data and student work for students they are focused upon. Teachers are empowered to positively affect student learning through service as leaders of the grade-level teams as well as the Racial Equity Team.

Impact
Teacher teamwork results in shared improvements in teacher practice and mastery of goals for groups of students. There is effective teacher leadership and teachers play an integral role in key decisions that affect student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- Grade-level teams meet on Thursday mornings before school to share and discuss students, their work, and common features across content areas. An observed grade-five teacher team focused on looking at student work, specifically on the skill-level demonstrated in their on-demand writing: below, meeting grade level, or above grade level. Teachers analyzed student work samples to determine where they scored on a Level 1-Level 4 range that represents grade-three through grade-six distinct levels on a writing rubric. Teachers discussed what common characteristics between the writing samples. After examining student work, teachers placed students in small groups based on needs observed in the writing samples. There were four different levels of progression. The team then reviewed and revised small-group lessons, discussed approaches and strategies, and created an implementation plan in order to more strategically support improvement in writing. As a result, teachers voiced more clarity about distinguishing the various levels regarding on-demand writing while looking at lead sentences, transitions, endings, organization and elaboration, and possible ways to teach next steps.

- Teachers, coaches, and school leaders stated that classroom practices, assessment data, and student work samples are systematically analyzed by teacher teams as evidenced in meeting minutes. In addition, data has shown that subgroups including students with disabilities, MLLs, boys, and girls have shown mastery of goal areas. In one data set, a reading intervention program designed by teacher teams to impact summer reading loss was implemented for 85 students in grades one through four upon their return to school in September 2018. Of the 85, 64 had lost one year; 17 had lost two years; three had lost three years; and one student had lost four years. The intensive reading intervention program was instituted and by March 2019, 13 of the original 85 gained four years; 39 of the 85 gained three years; 16 of the 85 gained two levels and 17 gained one year. An analysis of the last three years of State assessments in ELA show that all students improved from 70 to 75 percent; students with disabilities improved from 26 percent to 30 percent; and MLLs improved from eight percent to 22 percent.

- Teachers discussed distributed leadership structures that include Grade-level team leaders, teacher-led initiatives, and Racial Equity Team who are instrumental in the development of teachers as leaders. These structures are found in the grade-level team leaders who support teachers and play integral roles in key decision making that have an impact on student learning across the school. In addition, the social-emotional learning program was implemented with a teacher as facilitator. The Racial Equity Team members are also members of a sub-committee of the CR-SE initiative for District Two schools. This is the team that lead the redesign of the school's curricular documents to include a refocus on student engagement including students' racial and ethnic backgrounds as relevant inspirations.