Quality Review Report
2019-2020

P.S. 130 Hernando De Soto
Elementary 02M130
143 Baxter Street
Manhattan
NY 10013

Principal: Renny Fong

Dates of Review:
October 16, 2019 - October 17, 2019

Lead Reviewer: Jorge Estrella
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. 130 Hernando De Soto 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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### School Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<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>
<td>Well Developed</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
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### Systems for Improvement

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

| Quality Indicator | 1.4 Positive Learning Environment | Rating: Well Developed |

Findings
The school's approach to culture-building, discipline, and social-emotional support is informed by a theory of action that is reflected in multicultural activities integrated into the curriculum. The school community strategically aligns professional development, family outreach, and student learning experiences and supports.

Impact
School leaders and faculty have established an inclusive and safe school culture that enables students to make decisions that have a positive impact on the school community and that supports students' academic and personal growth.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders, teachers, parents, and students informed with enthusiasm and assertiveness about how the school maintains a supportive learning environment and has high expectations for learning and behavior. Faculty ensures that students are meaningfully engaged in the decision-making of the schoolwide activities. Students proposed to the principal to initiate a student ambassador program as a student government structure. As a result, the ambassadors were invited to the School Leadership Team to share their concerns about the quality of the food in the cafeteria. They also proposed, based on their units of study, instructional field trips. As part of the school's theory of action, there is an inclusive school culture reflected in the curriculum. Students reported that they were reading books from Asian, Latino, African-American, and European authors and feel represented and respected, regardless of their background. Furthermore, the school hosts several multicultural events where students perform. Parents shared that they, as well as members of senior citizen organizations, are invited and participate in those multicultural events. As a result, the school tone in classrooms, hallways, and large meeting spaces is calm, peaceful, and supports an inclusive school culture. Also, 100 percent of pre-k through grade five teachers say that students are safe in their class and 97 percent of families say that at their school their children are safe.

- In partnership with several community-based organizations the school offers art programs at every grade level from pre-kindergarten to the fifth grade that provide a significant learning experience for all students. The arts programs instill confidence, self-discipline, hard work, and pride. Students also participate in the school Lion Dance Club that studies the traditional Chinese dance and then perform during both the neighborhood's Lunar New Year Parade and other activities throughout the year. Parents shared that the confidence and discipline that students gain from the arts carry over and create a more positive attitude in their academic learning. During classroom visits, students demonstrate positive attitudes and well-developed learning behaviors. They worked independently, engaged maturely with peers in productive interactions, and contributed to lessons with insightful responses and reflections. Consequently, instructional activities impact positively on students’ academic and personal growth, creating a pathway to develop leadership skills and work habits that support college and career readiness.

- All faculty members received professional development on using emotional intelligence skills associated with recognizing, understanding, labeling, expressing, and regulating emotion (RULER) designed to ensure that students learn responsibility and are accountable for becoming their personal best. Also, teachers reported that they received training in social-emotional learning via a program that supports teachers to cultivate strong classroom relationships and empowers students to communicate, embrace diversity, and resolve conflict. Furthermore, parents participated in workshops provided by the school staff and parent association on topics like appropriate online behaviors, managing stress, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. As a result of these supports, teachers and parents are equipped with the necessary tools to ensure students and adults adopt effective and academic behaviors.
## Area of Focus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>2.2 Assessment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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### Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use assessments, rubrics, including a formal writing program’s and State standard rubrics, and have grading policies that are aligned with the school’s curricula. Teaching practices consistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment to determine student progress towards the learning objective.

### Impact

While assessments and rubrics provide actionable feedback to students across most classrooms, some missed opportunities were evident around offering meaningful feedback to students across the vast majority of classrooms. Most teachers’ formative assessment practices result in effective instructional adjustments during classroom instruction; however there were some missed opportunities to make on-the-spot adjustments to lessons.

### Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and teachers reported that they are using student-friendly, State standards-aligned rubrics and checklists across grades and subjects. A fourth-grade rubric for narrative writing allowed teachers and students to assess work based on structure, development, and language conventions. During the meeting with students, they articulated that the use of rubrics and checklists helped them have a better understanding of their progress towards their instructional targets and accomplish their tasks, projects, or assignments. For example, one student reported that for his written assignment he has to add dialogue because he wants to let the readers know what the character says or thinks. School leaders, teachers, and students also shared that as part of the coherent schoolwide grading policy, grades in each subject area reflect a combination of classwork, homework, projects, papers, examinations, and participation.

- Reviewed students’ work products and class observations reveal that teachers provide feedback to students. However, the quality of the feedback is not always meaningful across the vast majority of the classrooms. For example, some feedback reads. “You have written very detailed responses. Keep it up! Your next step is to organize your jots by the section that you have read!” or, “Great job on placing your digits in the correct place value! Next time, make sure to label your work.” However, other samples of student work still contain only highlighted or circled rubrics, percentages, or a comment or just check marks. Students reported that teachers are always accessible when they need support to move on with their work and provide them with the next steps including different approaches to address their needs.

- The review of samples of student work, along with classroom observations, showed student use of rubrics for self-assessment. For example, in reflection of her performance on a writing essay, a student noted, “I think I did very well on using vocabulary and internal traits. In my next writing piece, I want to give readers clues to figure out the problem in my story.”

- Across classrooms, teachers monitor student learning during the delivery of the lesson by checking for understanding using systems including targeted questions, one-on-one conferences, exit slips, and written reflections. In several lessons, teachers conferred with students and recorded students’ progress in their formative assessment tools. Then, based on information gathered, some teachers adjusted the lesson such as regrouping students, using different scaffolds, reteaching. In a fifth-grade Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) math lesson, both teachers circulated about the room recorded students’ responses in their formative assessment tools and based on the data gathered, some students were reassigned to different groups. This level of implementing checks for understanding to make on-the-spot adjustments to instruction is yet to be implemented across all classrooms.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rating:</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
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</table>

Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that all curricula are aligned to State standards, resulting in coherence across grades and subject areas. Rigorous habits and higher-order skills are emphasized in curricula and academic tasks for all learners are embedded coherently across all grades and subjects.

Impact

As a result of schoolwide coherence in curricula development and revision, curricula across grades and content areas incorporates computer science curriculum to promote college and career readiness for all students and ensures that all learners, including Multilingual Learners/English Language Learners (MLLs/ELLs) and students with disabilities must demonstrate their thinking by engaging in analyzing and solving real-world problems.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and teachers are using curricula aligned to the State standards and are fully implementing a reading and writing curriculum that is also aligned to State standards to provide students with a rigorous approach to reading and writing. The curricula also align to the Danielson Framework for Teaching, with deeper questioning in the form of key questions and is customized by grade teams. In a third-grade reading unit on how characters change and interact with one another throughout the story, one of the unit’s focus questions stated, “How do readers describe characters in a story and explain how their actions, traits, feelings, and motivations contribute to the sequence of events?” In a fifth-grade math lesson plan, students will be engaged in analyzing multi-step math problems. Science or social studies integrated units are chosen from the New York City Scope and Sequence. The math curriculum focuses on hands-on problem solving to allow students to gain deeper conceptual understanding through hands-on manipulatives, abstract symbols, diagrams, and models. As a result of these curricular decisions, students take part in coherent curricula across grades that prepare them for the challenges of college and careers.

- The review of instructional planning documents revealed that the pacing of units of study supports cohesion across grades. For example, units of study highlight the number of instructional days for teaching and identify the reading and writing units that are being taught in parallel. The units of study include the skills and strategies that will be taught in each of the reading and writing units. Lastly, they outline key standards, assessments, academic vocabulary, and scaffolds. As a result, levels of rigor are consistent in all classes and the results of standardized assessments have already evidenced a decrease in the achievement gap between general education and subgroup students schoolwide as per the school year 2017 to 2018 School Quality Snapshot.

- Instructional planning documents revealed that teachers incorporate rigorous habits and higher-order skills, such as those that require students to develop their own meaning, integrate skills into tasks, and use what they have learned to solve real-world problems, which are then identified and embedded coherently across grades and subjects. For example, a third-grade computer science lesson plan requires students to use coding to construct programs as a set of step-by-step instructions for their robots. In a fifth-grade interdisciplinary activity, students will work in groups to analyze extreme weather data, create a public service announcement, and an article to tell the community what they have learned and what can be done to reduce the impact of the extreme weather that they selected to study. Therefore, all students are consistently engaged in learning tasks to develop higher-order thinking skills.

- Reviewed lesson plans show that across grades and subjects, teachers are using the workshop model as well as scaffolds and extensions that are embedded in each lesson plan to allow for individual support for students, promote students' independence, and learn in a meaningful way. A third-grade math lesson plan evidence of tiered math problems, visuals, online instructional supports using wireless devices, and manipulatives support MLLs/ELLs and students with disabilities to ensure that students would be exposed to working through skills at several levels.
**Findings**

Across classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect an articulated set of beliefs about how students learn best. Teaching strategies consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula including the use of high-level computer science assignments.

**Impact**

As a result of a collective approach to how students learn best that is informed by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and the use of the workshop model across grades and subjects all learners, including MMLs/ELLs and students with disabilities, are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks, and demonstrate higher-order thinking skills in student work products.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Across classrooms, teaching practices were aligned to the curricula and reflected the articulated belief that students learn best when they participate in a culturally responsive, cohesive curriculum that is data-driven, inclusive, and engaging. Across grades and subjects classroom visits evidenced structured lessons using the workshop model followed by small group instruction or independent work. Classroom visits indicated that pedagogy is aligned to the curricula and informed by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Teachers provided students with opportunities to read a balance of informational and literary texts, become knowledgeable about the world through books, and engage in rigorous discussions about their readings. Fourth-grade students, for example, were reading *Mango, Abuela and Me*, and *Tiger Rising* and were observed brainstorming with partners about, “What ways can you study and learn from mentor texts?”

- Teachers use diverse grouping strategies, including one-on-one or small group adult support to scaffold learning. In a kindergarten, first- and second-grade bridge self-contained math class, the teacher facilitated a small group of students using manipulatives to identify and count to seven. Another group of students was using base-ten blocks to represent numbers from one to 1,000. The third group of students used an online math platform to strengthen their skills in place value and counting. In the fourth-grade ICT writing class, students used graphic organizers, mentor texts, visuals, and worked either one-on-one or in small group support. One of the teachers offered native language support for MMLs/ELLs. In a fourth-grade ICT math class, students were working independently using tablets with wireless capabilities and using coding to program different tasks for their robots to accomplish. Higher achievers worked in more complex tasks where they programmed their robots to perform more challenging routines. Consequently, all students demonstrate higher order thinking and participate in rigorous tasks.

- Teachers implemented tasks that promote higher-order thinking skills that provide academic challenge and independent thinking connected to real-world experiences. Advance learners engaged in independent tasks allowing them to extend their knowledge and go deeper into content. In a first-, second- and third-grade and bridge self-contained science class, students in small group settings were observed using and manipulating lanterns to determine the concept of energy and electricity. Students were provided with graphic organizers and guiding questions to accomplish their tasks. In a third-grade computer science lesson, students were working independently using tablets with wireless capabilities and using coding to program different tasks for their robots to accomplish. Higher achievers worked in more complex tasks where they programmed their robots to perform more challenging routines. Consequently, all students demonstrate higher order thinking and participate in rigorous tasks.
Additional Finding

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

Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* to the entire faculty. School leaders and staff effectively communicate expectations to family members connected to a path to college and career readiness via multiple venues such as open school nights, workshops, school website, and an online communication platform.

Impact

Effective protocols to communicate high expectations, along with the supports to achieve them, have led to a culture of mutual accountability to support student progress toward achievement of the high expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders engage in conversations with staff at regular grade-level and team meetings, via one-on-one discussions, distribute weekly newsletters, and connect via emails. At the beginning of each school year, school leaders provide teachers with a professional handbook that outlines clear expectations and professional responsibilities; including lesson plans, the school’s mission statement, instructional focus, grading policies, and expectations for classroom observations and evaluations aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*, as well as logistics, school policies and safety procedures. The 2019 School Survey shows that 100 percent of teachers say that the principal makes clear to the staff his expectations for meeting instructional goals.

- At the beginning of the school year, school leaders meet individually with each teacher to mutually discuss their professional learning goals for the year. One teacher’s goal states, “Working on conferencing in small groups and feedback for students in their reading and writing.” Another teacher’s goal states, “Bring up the Fountas & Pinnell (F&P) reading levels. Many students at level L. For math, breaking things down and differentiating for students, like rounding.” Based on Advance data, school leaders develop professional development (PD) opportunities designed to meet the needs of teachers along with schoolwide PD opportunities based on competencies of the Danielson *Framework for Teachers*. Teachers who participate in external PD sessions are expected to turnkey for their colleagues. This collaboration demonstrates collective accountability for pedagogical growth.

- School leaders use the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* as a model for high expectations around teaching practices and hold teachers accountable based on formal and informal observations. Observation report feedback to teachers identifies targets with clear next steps. For example, “As students spend a few more days generating character ideas, perhaps giving students access to the mini-charts from a reading/writing strategies book will provide visual support as they think further about the details they will include developing their characters. Also, the staff developer will be available next week to support you with the planning.” Hence, there is mutual accountability for supporting teachers to reach high expectations.

- At the start of the school year, during the open school night, school staff hosts an orientation meeting for all caregivers and provides them with information on the curriculum, provides an awareness around upcoming workshops, schoolwide activities, classroom celebrations, and day-to-day protocols. Throughout the school year, parents are offered workshops on topics such as the reading and writing workshop model, math, and tips to maximizing homework and study time. During the parent meeting, parents articulated their satisfaction with the academic and social-emotional support that the faculty provides for their children. Parents also stated that teachers use several methods to consistently communicate their children’s progress, attendance, and any other issues, including through an online communication platform. Parents have access to the school website which provides them with resources to support their children at home as well as detailed information about the middle school admissions process. As a result of these activities, parents are aware of the academic achievement of their children as well as their paths for colleges and careers.
Additional Finding

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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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</table>

Findings

All teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based professional teams that have strengthened teacher instructional capacity and promoted the implementation of State standards. Distributed leadership structures are embedded so that teacher leadership is consistently effective.

Impact

The work of teacher teams has resulted in increasing schoolwide instructional coherence and student achievement. Distributed leadership structures allowed teachers to implement online learning activities to support the implementation of PD sessions via webinars that have strengthened the instructional capacity of teachers and increased student achievement.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders ensure that all teachers have opportunities to develop and continually refine a rigorous, coherent curricula that are aligned to State standards and meets the needs of all students. Teachers are provided with common planning times to meet regularly in grade teams and during extended days on Mondays. Teachers participate in PD cycles, where they engage in inquiry-based collaborative activities, analyze student work and data using the Thin Slicing Protocol. For example, teachers determined that fifth-grade students working on informational writing showed that they could support their responses with textual evidence and are also able to generate ideas for their writing independently and elaborate with details. However, they need to continue developing their summaries, making them concise, and synthesize the essential events in the text and strengthen their writing development and organization. To address those needs, teachers updated rubrics and checklists to set goals and continue small group instruction to focus on specific strategies. As a result, the 2019 State English Language Arts (ELA) assessment showed 74 percent of students scoring at the proficient level or above, which is 24 percentage points higher than the City, and one percentage point higher than the district.

- During the fifth-grade teacher team meeting, teachers used the Thin Slicing Protocol to review the flash-draft of narrative writing pieces divided in high (H), middle (M), and not yet (NY). Teachers identified several areas of strengths and needs that students demonstrated. In the H group, some students had lots of elaboration but needed to stretch out the moments. In the M group, some students can identify the heart of the story but need to add dialogue, and in the NY group, some students have structure in place but also need further development to elaborate their story. Teachers then decided to try out differentiated graphic organizers in their small groups and bring back more artifacts. Teachers shared that as a result of their collaborative work during teacher team meetings, they now plan effective lessons that are data-driven and aligned to standards, as well as incorporating student needs, complex materials, and higher-order questioning. As a result of inquiry-based collaborations, pedagogues have increased their capacity to deliver instructional and specific strategies to support student achievement while promoting schoolwide coherence.

- Distributive leadership structures are in place where the school has a literacy coach and team leaders who model and facilitate innovative and supportive practice, creative and rigorous unit planning, and coherent assessment practices. During the interview, teachers shared that they play a key role in curricula decision making, offer professional development, and lead initiatives for school environment improvement. For example, the literacy coach and technology teacher set up live webinars to demonstrate to teachers how to effectively use a formal book on reading strategies. Teachers shared how practical and useful the book was and how it provided teachers with strategies they could immediately start using with their students. As a result of these practices, the 2019 State math assessment shows 85 percent of students scoring at the proficient level or above, which is 33 percentage points higher than the City, and five percentage points higher than the district.