Quality Review Report

2019-2020

P.S. 134 Henrietta Szold
Elementary 01M134
293 East Broadway
Manhattan
NY 10002

Principal: Robert Perales

Dates of Review:
January 16, 2020 - January 17, 2020

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

School Quality Ratings

### Instructional Core

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Ensure engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula in all subjects, accessible for a variety of learners and aligned to State standards and/or content standards</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</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>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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</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 school's instructional goals and meet student learning needs, as evidenced by meaningful student work products</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
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<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>
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<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>
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<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>
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<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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Area of Celebration

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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.4 Positive Learning Environment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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Findings

Environment and culture are specifically addressed through social-emotional periods built into each student’s schedule. Structures including a culture and climate committee support the implementation of the Sanford Harmony curriculum.

Impact

As a result of the school's effective approach to culture building a safe and inclusive environment results with students and adults treating each other respectfully and student voice valued. Adults provide guidance and support to students that align with student learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- This year to further support the social-emotional needs of students and develop an inclusive school culture, staff members have created a culture and climate committee that meets monthly. The team is comprised of teachers from multiple grades and content areas, a guidance counselor and a parent. This team has attended training on the Sanford Harmony social emotional learning program and is leading the rest of the staff in incorporating this into the curriculum. The members of the committee present professional development to the rest of the staff. The stakeholders regarding the school’s mission statement, learning environment, social-emotional development beliefs, leadership and family engagement to inform their professional development planning, completed a survey. Such training ensures the staff’s belief is aligned with the school’s values and they are supported in creating safe, engaging classroom communities where students feel a sense of belonging and ownership. The implementation of classroom routines that give students opportunities to share how they are feeling each day promoting the realization of this goal.

- The school staff maintains a partnership with the Henry Street Mental Health Clinic and the University Settlement Families Thriving program to support students and their families. Staff members are able to refer students and families for in-school therapy as well as in-home family and parenting support. Staff members utilize strategies and structures including restorative practices, therapeutic crisis intervention, and de-escalation practices incorporating the development of individual crisis management plans. As a result as of these partnerships and structures, school leaders and teachers report that there has been a reduction in the number of OORS incidents and a decrease in the number of referrals to the crisis response team.

- During the student meeting students shared that they feel well known by multiple adults through community building and social-emotional periods that are embedded into the schedule where students can check in and share what they learned that day. Moreover, students communicated feeling safe at the school, and know whom to speak to if they need social-emotional support. Consistent social-emotional learning is reinforced in classrooms across the school, with lessons addressing the school’s core values: respect, responsibility, accountability and perseverance that are also part of their behavior management system. This focus on social-emotional growth connected to the school’s core values supports the staff in meeting students where they are and aligns with the individual learning needs of each student.
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

While teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect the belief that students learn best through explicit instruction, modeling and application of skills and concepts, it is not yet evident in the vast majority of classrooms. The Danielson Framework for Teaching informs these practices and focuses on student engagement and small group instruction.

Impact

While student work products and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking and participation so that all students produce meaningful work products, this is not yet evident across the majority of classrooms.

Supporting Evidence

- During a first-grade writing workshop using nonfiction chapter books, the teacher first provided explicit instruction on the use of a writing checklist and developing goals for their writing. Students then worked in small groups to construct their writing goals based on what the teacher modeled. Learners who needed additional support met in a small group with the teacher and were given a copy of the checklist in addition to model goals they could reference. During a second-grade reading lesson addressing how characters deal with problems, students worked independently or in a small teacher guided group as they read their text. While graphic organizers and post-its were utilized to capture examples of how characters felt and dealt with problems, they were not used consistently. During a third-grade writing workshop, students worked in small groups as they provided peer feedback on persuasive speeches. Teaching practices reflected the articulated beliefs of how students learn best, including small group instruction, but it is not yet evident in the all classrooms.

- During a fifth-grade integrated math lesson centered on multi-step word problems using fractions, students worked in pairs and trios as they practiced using a numberless word problem solving strategy. In their small group discussions, they predicted what they thought the question was going to ask and what information they would need to answer the question. However, most of the questions during the lesson were teacher generated and students had limited opportunities to develop their own questions. During a fourth-grade science lesson, students watched a variety of animal videos and recorded observations addressing how animals use their senses to help them survive in their environment. After each video, students took notes and then turned to a partner to share their thinking. During this lesson, there were clear routines, with the conversation being student-led. However, student work products across the vast majority of classrooms did not always reflect this high level of student thinking and participation.

- During a fourth-grade ELA lesson students used the steps modeled by the teacher as they worked in small groups and practiced writing a conclusion to an essay requiring them to compare the themes in two texts. During their small group discussions, students could reference the model and steps that were posted in the front of the room. During a kindergarten guided reading lesson where students were to discover additional details in a text, the teacher first modeled what readers think about as they are reading, noticing new details or wondering what a character might be thinking. The teacher then continued reading and provided questions that had students addressed how the character felt and explain their answer. While the practice of modeling and providing supports and structures was observed across most classrooms visited led to high levels of thinking and participation, it is not yet evident in the vast majority of classrooms.
Findings
School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to State standards with a focus on problem solving and application of skills and concepts. Across grades and subjects, rigorous habits and higher-order skills are emphasized for all students, including Multiple Language Learners (MLLs) and students with disabilities.

Impact
The curricula and academic tasks support college and career readiness and student development of rigorous habits and higher-order thinking abilities.

Supporting Evidence

- A review of curricular documents reveals alignment to State standards. The school uses the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project for reading and writing and the Engage NY curricula for math. Lesson plans emphasize the use of literary and informational texts in English Language Arts (ELA) and multi-step word problems with operations in math. For instance, in a reading lesson, students are asked to think about primary and secondary characters and why the author included them in the text. A math lesson plan describes how students will solve multi-step word problems using fractions and assess the reasonableness of the answers using benchmark fractions. Purposeful decisions by school leaders and staff is building coherence across grades and subjects.

- Unit plans consistently challenge students to utilize rigorous habits in the course of instruction. ELA learning objectives across grades for unit and lesson plans require students to predict and provide facts and opinions when writing persuasive essays. Additionally, students are asked to consistently write and connect their writing to evidence from the text. Lesson plans regularly detail high-level questions. Higher-order questions were in evidence across lessons. In a first-grade writing plan students were asked why they needed a checklist to set goals in their teaching books. In a fifth-grade math lesson students were to predict what they were going to be asked in a problem and to explain the information needed to reach a solution and provide a rationale for their explanation.

- A review of curricular documents demonstrates academic tasks consistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills for all students across grades and subjects. A first-grade reading unit asks students to use reading strategies to learn how snap words support their comprehension of texts and understand the difference between snap words and decodable words. A third-grade social science unit on immigration asks students to write an opinion essay that provides evidence to support their point of view. Unit and lesson plans include modifications for students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) to address IEP learning goals including sentences and leveled pieces of text. A fourth-grade science plan focusing on animal survival includes the use of sentence stems, a graphic organizer to record their notes, and videos of a variety of animals. Lesson plans involving MLLs include scaffolds, such as translated resources and visuals, so they are able to demonstrate their thinking according to the same high-level standards expected of all students.
### Additional Finding

**Quality Indicator:**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>2.2 Assessment</th>
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<td>Rating:</td>
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<td>Proficient</td>
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**Findings**

Across classrooms, teachers use or create assessments and rubrics aligned with the school's curricula, including Teachers College writing assessments and running records. School leaders and teachers use common assessments to determine student progress toward goals across grades and subject areas.

**Impact**

Actionable feedback is provided students regarding their achievement. Assessment data is used to adjust curricula and instruction.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Across classrooms, samples of student work products revealed teacher-written actionable feedback directing students to the steps they should take to strengthen their work. One example of feedback read, “I love how you provided lots of details and used exact action words in your writing. Next time, make sure you proofread your writing and use the word wall to help you spell the works correctly.” Another student’s work praised how the student answered the questions and advised him to show his math thinking in the future. Actionable feedback appears on post-it notes and is written on rubrics displayed in classrooms and bulletin boards across grades and subjects.

- Teachers use rubrics, aligned to the school’s curricula to grade student performance on assignments. Teachers indicate student grades according to the rubric by circling levels attained based on the assignment. Additionally, teachers use checklists such as an editing checklist for persuasive speeches or self-portraits in art. During the student meeting, students reported that rubrics are primarily used in writing and reading or they receive verbal feedback or post-it notes on their work in other content areas. However, not all students always understood the language used in the rubrics. Consequently, the use of rubrics do not yet provide actionable and meaningful feedback across all grades and subjects. Moreover, assessment practices do not yet offer a clear portrait of student mastery, as evidenced by some assessment documents that lacked clarity of performance for the students.

- Common assessments are used to determine student progress and considerations for schoolwide support. There are three benchmark periods during the year when assessments are given in reading, writing and math. In reading, teachers administer running records to assess student reading levels and in writing the Teachers College writing continuum is used. A pre and post assessment is administered to students in writing across the genres of narrative, informational, and opinion. In reviewing reading data last year, the school noted gaps in reading for a number of students specifically in the area of phonemic awareness. Targeted support was then provided to groups of students in kindergarten and first grade to support gaps in reading development. As a result of this data analysis teachers provided targeted small group support that better met the specific needs of students. In addition, teachers use conference notes to monitor the status of student progress and note strategies students are using to support their learning.
Findings
School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the entire staff through the staff handbook, weekly bulletin, and a needs generated professional development (PD) plan. School leaders and staff consistently communicate expectations to families that are connected to a path to college and career readiness.

Impact
Feedback and support have increased teachers’ understanding and awareness of school leaders’ expectations around teaching and learning. Communication with families provides opportunities for them to understand student progress toward meeting standards and expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders communicate their high expectations for teachers through frequent classroom observations. Feedback is developed utilizing the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* as the standard for professionalism and high-quality instruction. Feedback to one teacher advised her to reference resources to help students use concrete materials properly and make sense of their answers. Additionally, it was suggested that different methods for double-checking beyond abstract number work be provided along with self-assessment. School leaders provide an outline for teachers regarding what the school’s instructional focus looks like in a classroom and how it is aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. As teachers determine their pedagogical approach they are encouraged to consider diverse learner’s needs, the materials to support these learners, and how to vary the tasks while still ensuring rigor. As a result of the strategic feedback and clear communication from school leaders the school's expectations are realized.

- A variety of supports have increased teachers’ understanding and awareness of school leaders’ expectations around teaching and learning. Teachers receive a faculty handbook that reviews areas of schoolwide focus, such as the school’s instructional focus, guidelines for planning, and the classroom environment. School leaders regularly reinforce all expectations. The PD plan makes it clear that school leaders support teachers in their understanding of expectations. Topics such as analyzing achievement data for writing, reading, and math and using that data to inform instructional adjustments are addressed. Through emails and weekly bulletins, school leaders remind the staff the importance of addressing the instructional focus. This year it is centered upon supporting student progress through the use of the workshop model where students engage collaboratively and individually in their learning. During meetings teachers shared that the school leader regularly communicated what is expected along with the supports needed to make them happen.

- High expectations are shared with families through parent workshops and monthly principal breakfasts. The focus is to provide families with strategies to best support their children outside of class. Workshops often take place during PTA meetings and target topics such as explanation of report cards, grade wide expectations and the middle school application process. Documents are translated into multiple languages and include information about their child’s attendance and academic progress. School staff communicates student academic and social-emotional progress with parents through text messages, emails, and parent-teacher conferences. During the parent meeting, parents shared that they are provided opportunities to prepare their children for the next grade level by meeting with the teacher their child will have for the upcoming year. As a result, parents have a clear understanding of the expectations for the next learning level.
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 structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations that promote achievement with a focus on the school goal addressing strengthening student engagement. Teacher teams consistently analyze data and student work for students they share.

Impact

Teachers' collaborations have strengthened their instructional capacity. Work done in teacher teams typically results in progress toward goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- The school’s Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) made up of teacher representatives across grade levels and school leaders meets regularly to review exam trends and student progress. The ILT engaged in Instructional Rounds and student shadowing at the beginning of the year as they visited classrooms to collect low-inference data. The team reviewed student assessment data in math and ELA looking for trends across the school. Members of the team determined that in math, while most students are stronger with finding factors and place value, they needed additional support with comparing fractions and generating patterns. In ELA, strengths surfaced around citing textual evidence in the passage, understanding the main idea and theme of the text. Next steps identified by the team included increasing the use of individual and small-group instruction leading to improved teacher practice.

- A fourth-grade teacher team was observed reviewing student assessment data from the recent middle of the year math assessment. Prior to the meeting each teacher had reviewed the data from the students in their class and identified questions that multiple students answered incorrectly. During the meeting, the members of the teacher team discussed specific questions from the assessment to analyze the trends in the assessment data. The teachers identified that while students understood comparison statements in word problems, they continued to struggle with converting to the correct place value and from word to number form correctly. Using a graphic organizer, the team identified the content strengths and weaknesses and the percentage of students who answered each question correctly. Students that improved along with those who struggled on the assessment and needed additional support were identified. The review and monitoring of student progress by teacher teams is resulting in progress for most groups of students as evidenced in benchmark assessments, conferencing notes, and running record data.

- Grade level teams meet weekly to review and discuss trends in student work and use the collaborative assessment protocol. During these meetings, teachers present student work, identify areas of strength, areas of growth, and identify next steps. Based on the review of the data in math, teachers are incorporating the use of the concrete-representational-abstract (CRA) model that is used across grade levels to increase students’ ability to explain their mathematical thinking verbally and in writing. A review of math benchmark assessment data shows positive student growth from the beginning of the year to mid-year. In ELA, small group instruction, shared reading, and guided reading is being used to support the range of reading levels. The use of a protocol to review data and identify next steps is resulting in improved teacher practice and student progress.