Quality Review Report

2019-2020

P.S. 290 Manhattan New School

Elementary 02M290

311 East 82 Street
Manhattan
NY 10028

Principal: Doreen Esposito

Dates of Review:
January 22, 2020 - January 23, 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. 290 Manhattan New School 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>To what extent does the school...</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>Well Developed</td>
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<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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<tr>
<td>School Culture</td>
<td>Area</td>
<td>Rating</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that supports</td>
<td>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
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<tr>
<td>the academic and personal growth of students and adults</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
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<td>expectations to staff, students, and families, and provide supports to</td>
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<tr>
<td>achieve those expectations</td>
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<tr>
<th>Systems for Improvement</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school's</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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<td>instructional goals and meet student learning needs, as evidenced by</td>
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<td>meaningful student work products</td>
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<td>3.1 Establish a coherent vision of school improvement that is</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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<td>reflected in a short list of focused, data-based goals that are tracked</td>
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<td>for progress and are understood and supported by the entire school</td>
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<tr>
<td>community</td>
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<td>4.1 Observe teachers using the Danielson Framework for Teaching</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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<td>along with the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate schoolwide</td>
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<td>instructional practices and implement strategies that promote</td>
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<td>professional growth and reflection</td>
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<td>4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using</td>
<td>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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<td>an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on</td>
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<td>improved student learning</td>
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<td>5.1 Evaluate the quality of school-level decisions, making</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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<td>adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and</td>
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<td>practices across the school, with particular attention to State</td>
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<tr>
<td>standards</td>
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Area of Celebration

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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.4 Positive Learning Environment</td>
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Findings

The use of responsive classroom strategies, such as daily morning meetings, ensure that each student is known well by at least one adult. The school community aligns professional development (PD), family outreach, student learning experiences, and supports related to creating a positive learning environment.

Impact

Social-emotional learning programs and supports promote and result in students adopting effective academic and personal behaviors.

Supporting Evidence

- The school staff has implemented the Recognizing, Understanding, Labeling, Expressing, and Regulating (RULER) approach in supporting social and emotional learning that includes the use of the mood meter across all classrooms. The staff incorporates responsive classroom approaches that include Mindful Monday activities and morning meeting routines across all classrooms each day. Class charts developed by students describing the type of environment they would like in their classroom and how they will help each other, are also posted in all classrooms. During the large student meeting, students shared that they check in with the mood meter each day. If they are dealing with a challenging situation, students can take a meta-moment to reflect on how they are feeling, and then return to the class activities. Students responded that through these structures and experiences they are well known by at least one adult in the school as evidenced in a reduction of behavior incident reports.

- Students participate in a variety of clubs and activities during and after school. Band, choir, arts, science, healthy cooking, sports, technology, and student leadership are some of the clubs and activities offered. In a technology class, students were working on a multimedia presentation on what makes them unique. After working independently, students reflected as a whole class on the steps they found challenging, and how they could improve the written part of the slideshow. They also reflected on how they could apply the skills they are learning in this class to the work they are doing in their other classes. In a band class, students were practicing a new piece of music, first as an entire group and then by sections. Students were provided opportunities to reflect on how to best continue to practice the selected piece of music on their own and self-assessed their progress based on a rubric provided by the teacher. The school community uses a variety of learning experiences to promote the adoption of effective academic and personal behaviors.

- The staff participates in professional development directly related to social-emotional learning and behavior interventions. The school’s guidance counselor, social worker, and parent coordinator works with the rest of the staff to support both students and parents. The school communicates with families through parent teacher conferences, school newsletters, school website, emails, and phone calls. Parent workshops addressing the middle school process, and how to support the academic and social-emotional progress of their child are held during the year. Throughout the year, specific events such as monthly First Fridays and Moving-Up Night as the end of the year celebrate the academic and socio-emotional success of students. Parents shared that they often volunteer in their child’s classroom. Both students and parents underscored that the school provides a positive learning environment resulting in students adopting effective academic and personal behaviors including knowing how to self-advocate for their academic and social-emotional needs.
Area of Focus

| Quality Indicator: | 4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development | Rating: | Proficient |

Findings
The majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations. Teacher teams consistently analyze data and the work of students on whom they are focused.

Impact
While the work of teachers has resulted in increased student achievement for groups of students, typically resulting in improved teacher practice, it is not resulting in shared improvements in teacher practice for the vast majority of teachers.

Supporting Evidence

- The majority of teachers meet weekly in grade-level teams that are led by an instructional coach to analyze student work and assessment data. Each grade-level team is led by a grade-level leader who is the liaison between the grade-level team who works with an instructional coach, to determine the agenda and focus for each meeting. The instructional coach collaborates with grade-level teams to provide support as they engage in inquiry work to reinforce the school’s focus on responsive classroom practices. However, the inquiry-based collaboration has not strengthened the instructional capacity of the vast majority of teachers as evidenced in a review of grade-level agendas and minutes where time-bound actionable next steps are not consistently identified and monitored.

- Review of teacher teams’ meeting minutes shows that teachers are using various protocols such as the Atlas protocol when looking at student work. One teaching point they looked at was adding two numbers to keep the larger numbers whole and add the smaller number in parts. Teachers agreed that they would work with a small group of students to implement new strategies. To provide opportunities for students to demonstrate that they have grown in this area, teachers provided word problems and had students show their work. Teachers brought data from their small group documenting how many times a student used the strategy introduced by the teacher. Teachers shared that they are participating in PD that supports their learning around using data analysis to adjust their instruction and the school’s focus on responsive classrooms. Analysis of student work and data by grade-level teams results in progress towards goals for groups of students but does not yet result in shared improvements in teacher practice by the vast majority of teachers.

- During an observation of the pupil personnel team, team members analyzed student work samples of two referred students to identify areas of strength, gaps, and next steps. Members of the team took on different roles including team lead, timekeeper, and note taker. The team followed an agenda that included time markers for each part of the meeting. The team identified some next steps including push-in and pull-out support, small group instruction, seating arrangements in the room, and leveled materials. The team shared that they meet weekly and that there is a referral process when the staff would like the pupil personnel team to review particular students’ progress. The team follows up on the progress of referred students every six to eight weeks. While structures like the pupil personnel team and grade-level teams are resulting in progress toward goals for groups of students, they are not resulting in shared improvements in teacher practice for the vast majority of teachers.
**Additional Finding**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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**Findings**

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to State standards. Across grades and subjects, responsive-classroom practices to support self-regulation and positive peer interactions are implemented with an emphasis on rigorous habits and higher-order skills for all students.

**Impact**

Coherent curricula support college and career readiness for all students. A diversity of students have access to the curricula and tasks and are cognitively engaged.

**Supporting Evidence**

- A review of curricular documents show alignment to the State standards, with the school using reading and writing units in English Language Arts (ELA). Math modules are aligned with the Common Core Learning Standards. The school ensures curricula coherence with the New York City (NYC) Social Studies Scope and Sequence, and the New York State (NYS) science standards. School leaders and grade-level teams monitor the pacing and implementation of each curriculum. Teachers reflect on the units taught in the previous year and make adjustments to the pacing and sequencing with necessary revisions completed by teacher teams throughout the year. As a result of the alignment of curricular documents across grades and content areas, college and career readiness is promoted for all students.

- Curricular documents evidence consistent alignment with the State standards. For example, a math lesson objective describes how students will be able to solve *put together and take apart* story problems that have three addends and a total unknown and understand that the equal sign represents equivalence. A writing lesson objective outlines how students will practice writing opinion pieces and include quotes from the text to support their opinion. Across grades and subjects, the alignment of lesson and unit objectives and instructional outcomes with State standards results in curricula coherence.

- Teachers refine all lessons and units for groups of students. A fourth-grade science lesson plan describes a focus on preparing for an interview with an expert by writing interview questions and collecting evidence to support their scientific claim. There is a clear explanation of the task, with strategies to support groups of students that include sentence starters, and a questioning chart to which students can refer. A lesson plan for a fifth-grade writing class describes student groupings and conference schedules based on the levels of student support needed towards completing their research-based argument essay. A second-grade lesson plan focuses on finding quotes from reading books, allowing students to support their claims. Struggling students are assigned leveled books, trackers and headphones to reduce auditory distractions. Lesson and unit plans demonstrate that curricular and academic tasks emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills for groups of students and provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their thinking.
Additional Finding

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.2 Pedagogy</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
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Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teaching practices are aligned with the curricula and reflect a coherent set of beliefs that students learn best when they have a growth mindset, and use tools and strategies to make choices about their learning. Across these same classrooms, student work products and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking, participation, and ownership.

Impact

Teaching practices across the vast majority of classes reflect school beliefs about how students learn best. Additionally, all learners are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks, demonstrate higher-order thinking skills, and produce meaningful student-work products.

Supporting Evidence

- Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers post the day’s lesson objective or instructional outcome that describes what students will work on during the lesson in language that supports student ownership of their learning. Examples include, “I can compare the value of digits in a multi-digit number,” “How can we keep track of multiple steps and check for accuracy?,” and “Students will be able to compare and contrast by putting two objects side by side and asking how they are similar, how they are different and the significance of their observations.” There is also evidence of student ownership of learning during independent work, with students using a graphic organizer to indicate how they are progressing on their work. The graphic organizer requires students to both self-monitor and reflect on where they are with their learning and if they need additional supports. Sentence stems from the organizer support a growth mindset and prompt students to think about what they are proud of, their goals, what they need help with, or if they would like a new challenge. These teaching practices reflect a coherent belief across the school that students learn best through ownership of their learning.

- In a fourth-grade writing lesson, students worked with their writing partners as they rotated to three different stations, each containing two different objects for them to practice comparing and contrasting as they prepared to write a compare and contrast essay. As they visited each station, students took notes about the two objects and the ways they were similar or different. When students completed their station rotation, they came together as a whole class and shared out what they learned from their station work and created a class chart of tips for comparing and contrasting. Likewise, during a lesson in a first-grade class, students worked on their own or in partners as they completed true/false equations through Roll and Record, and Five in a Row games to learn about addition and subtraction. Students could choose from a variety of strategies and tools to assist them, such as the number line and bead-board. Similar lessons across grades and content areas also reflected high levels of student participation and ownership.

- A fifth-grade lesson focused on students solving multistep word problems and finding the best price for items described in their word problem. Students had put together data-presentation posters that they shared with other students and asked for feedback. Students stated they like being able to choose their focus and could speak to the purpose and criteria for the assignment. During a third-grade reading lesson, students learned about how to get to know a character deeply, how characters can be like icebergs, and how at first the reader may only see what is on the surface. The teacher prompted students to think about a character from the story they were reading to come up with an idea about the character that may be beneath the iceberg. Students then shared their thinking with a partner before the whole-class share.
Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers use or create assessments, rubrics, and portfolios that offer a clear portrait of student achievement. Teachers’ assessment practices consistently reflect the varied use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

Impact

High-quality assessment practices provide actionable and meaningful feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement. Teachers’ assessment practices result in effective instructional adjustments to meet all students’ needs and articulate to them what their next learning steps should be.

Supporting Evidence

- Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers use or create assessments and rubrics and checklists that result in actionable and meaningful feedback regarding student achievement. In a fifth-grade end-of-unit multiplication and division test, the rubric outlines that the test is assessing students on their understanding of the concepts of factors and multiples, the application of multiplication and division strategies, and their understanding of mathematics in real life. Feedback included that the students were meeting expectations with distinction in having an organizing strategy to determine all factors of a number and that they were approaching expectations in understanding the concept of either factors or multiples. A third-grade informational writing checklist prompts students to connect pieces of information to each other and group information into sections and paragraphs. Students spoke to how they incorporated the feedback they received when completing their future assignments such as, including more examples and stating their opinion in their writing.

- Across classrooms, teachers use rubrics and checklists aligned with the curricula to communicate actionable and meaningful feedback towards supporting students’ academic growth. Examples of this practice include an argument and debate rubric, reading notebook checklist, and a climate presentation rubric. An ancient history research project checklist serves as an outline for students to ensure their final project is informative, detailed, interesting, and applies critical thinking skills towards their research topic. An example of teacher feedback on a writing rubric states, "I see you incorporating crafting techniques from other writing units into your work, like onomatopoeia and talking to the writer. As you continue to grow as a writer, try to make more of a mental movie by adding more details." Student work maintained in portfolios provides evidence of students’ use of feedback from teachers as well as self-reflecting on the progress they made on an assignment helps them to identify what they want to continue to improve. The use of rubrics and checklists aligned to the curricula by teachers and students across grades and content areas results in a clear portrait of students’ progress toward mastery.

- Students reflect on their assignments and establish their instructional goals. One student wrote at the end of a unit focused on analyzing themes, "I improved because I learned how to identify a theme and use evidence to support my ideas. I would like to work on trying to identify more than one theme." Another example of student reflection and goal setting for comparing, adding, and subtracting fractions and mixed numbers states, "I can work on using more than one strategy to solve and reading the problem more carefully." Students in grades three through five maintain a portfolio of their work throughout the year that is reviewed by teachers, students, and parents at least three times a year. As a result of these practices, students demonstrate their understanding of their next learning steps leading to improved work products.
Additional Finding

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<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 student choice, self-regulation, and a growth mindset. School leaders and staff effectively communicate expectations for a path to college and career readiness to families through handbooks, meetings, workshops, and newsletters.

Impact

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

Supporting Evidence

- Frequent classroom observations, conducted by school leaders, are used to 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. Expectations communicated and supported through the staff handbook, memos, and PD throughout the year that emphasize the schoolwide use of assessment data to inform instruction and goal setting. School leaders outline the school’s instructional focus on questioning and responsive classrooms and provide PD throughout the year that is planned by the PD committee comprised of school leaders and teachers. School leaders ask teachers to frequently check for student understanding and adjust lessons based on these checks. This practice directly aligns with the Danielson Framework for Teaching rubric for designing instruction and using assessment. As a result of feedback and PD, there is a culture of mutual accountability that supports meeting the school’s expectations.

- School leaders consistently communicate the school’s goal of promoting the use of self-monitoring strategies to improve student self-advocacy across all content areas. It is an expectation that teachers use student assessment and portfolio data in the planning of small-group instruction and differentiation and work with students to set goals, assess progress, and plan next steps. To support all students in the schoolwide focus, teachers implement mood meters and peace corners, using them throughout all classrooms, hallways, and offices. Classroom and staff charters developed by the entire staff reflect how the school community wants to feel, what the school community can do to help others feel this way, and what to do when they feel that they “are not living the charter.” Clear and frequent communication between school leaders and staff results in a culture of mutual accountability.

- School staff work with students to ensure they are on track for the next grade level and middle school. Parents spoke of the partnership they had with the school and specifically referenced the parent meetings and social-emotional and intervention workshops the school provides throughout the year. These workshops positively impact the progress of their child and informs parents on how they can support their child at home. Parents are informed about the middle school application process through one-on-one meetings and workshops. The school also communicates expectations through the parent handbook, emails, phone calls, parent-teacher conferences, and curriculum nights. Thus, through a variety of strategic methods, the school is successfully partnering with families to support students in meeting all expectations.